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**COLLECTIVE THOUGHTS:
A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO PREPARATION
AND PERFORMANCE OF OPEN FORM COMPOSITIONS
FOR GROUPS**

ALEXIOS PORFYRIADIS

**A portfolio of compositions and commentary submitted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements of Bath Spa University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

School of Music and Performing Arts

October 2016

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COMPOSITIONS PORTFOLIO

2016

Moving Sound

2015

TONES, NOISES, MELODIES and RHYTHMS

2014

Collective Thoughts

The C-Duo

2013

Radschlag

2012

One Minute is more than One Minute

STC

2011

Air

Aria

Blocked Piano

Complicity

The f-duo

2010

Spotting Nowhere

Words of Nothing

DOCUMENTATION

***Words of Nothing* (2010)**

Performance in KNOT Gallery Athens, 4 June 2011. Performers: Danae Stefanou, Alexis Porfiriadis.

***Words of Nothing* (2010) and *Aria* (2010/11)**

1. Performance in Trinity College of Music, Greenwich/London/UK, 18 May 2012.
2. Performance in INTIME Symposium University of Coventry/UK, 21 October 2012.

Performers: Andreas Papapetrou (*Words of Nothing*), Sapfo Pantzaki (*Aria*).

***Spotting Nowhere* (2010/11) for 4 people using string instruments**

Performance in KNOT Gallery Athens, 4 June 2011. Performers: Theano Giannezi, Alexandra Karamoutsiou, Georgia Koumara and Olga Papakonstantinou.

***Complicity* (2011) for voice(s), wind instrument, string instrument, piano and percussion/ object player(s)**

1. Performance in KNOT Gallery Athens, 5 May 2012. Performers: Alexandra Karamoutsiou, Georgia Koumara, Penelope Papathanasiou, Olga Papakonstantinou, Antonis Rouvelas.
2. Performance in Bath Spa University, 16 May 2012. Experimental Music Ensemble Material

***Air* (2011) for movement**

1. Performance in Trianon Theatre, Music in Motion Festival, 30 May 2015, Athens.

Performers: Vitoria Kotsalou, Vasiliki Chrysanthakopoulou

The f duo (2011) for 2 good friends, laptop(s), mp3 recorder and instrument(s)

Performed in KNOT Gallery Athens, 5 May 2012. Performers: Yiannis Kotsonis and Nikos Mardakis

One Minute is more than One Minute (2011/12)

1. Performance in KNOT Gallery Athens, 11 May 2013. Performers: Odysseas Gkallios, Georgia Koumara, Angeliki Mousiou, Olga Papakonstantinou, Stelios Tsairidis.

2. Performance in State Museum for Contemporary Art Thessaloniki, 7 January 2015. Performers: Odysseas Gkallios, Yorgos Holopoulos, Dafne Mantousi, Yannis Milonelis, Stavroula Sotiri, Vassilis Voudouris.

3. Performance in KulturPension in Prenning, Deutschfeistritz, Prenninger Resonanzen 26 October 2015. Performers: Lee Wen-Cheh, Mara Probst, Alexandra Radoulova, Renata Rakova, Antonis Rouvelas.

STC for a group of people (2012)

Performance: KNOT Gallery Athens, 11 May 2013. Performers: Odysseas Gkallios, Georgia Koumara, Angeliki Mousiou, Olga Papakonstantinou, Stelios Tsairidis.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of my research is to investigate, both in theory and in practice, the ways groups work and behave when they are asked to work collectively on the preparation of an *open form* verbal and/or graphic composition's version. It also investigates the often-neglected topic of who might take decisions regarding the performance of open form pieces for groups, when these decisions are to be made, and the effects on the relationships between performers or between performers and composer. Furthermore, it investigates the potential growth of *group creativity* and of a group state of mind through collective work between players of open form pieces as well as the problems of working in groups.

A theoretical context for the term 'open form' is provided using historical and recent examples from the work of composers of the last and present century, as well as for the terms 'group' and 'group creativity', followed by a discussion of the different manifestations of group creativity and 'group flow' in music and especially in open form musical compositions. These issues are discussed in the context of my own work in composing verbal and graphic open form pieces for groups, which cultivate collective work and responsibility.

The commentary explains the way I work as a composer, and the theoretical, musical and social driving force behind my music. It also describes working practices that could present models for other composers to consider when making notated music for groups.

1. Decisions regarding the performance of open form music for groups

1.1 Open Form and decisions concerning the structure of open form pieces

(A) classical composition, whether it be a Bach fugue, Verdi's Aida, or Stravinsky's Rite of Spring, posits an assemblage of sound units which the composer arranged in a closed, well-defined manner before presenting it to the listener. He converted his idea into conventional symbols which more or less oblige the eventual performer to reproduce the format devised by the composer himself, whereas the new musical works referred to above¹ reject the definitive, concluded message and multiply the formal possibilities of the distribution of their elements. They appeal to the initiative of the individual performer, and hence they offer themselves not as finite works which prescribe specific repetition along given structural coordinates but as "open" works, which are brought to their conclusion by the performer at the same time as he experiences them on an aesthetic plane. (Eco 1989: 3-4)

Umberto Eco describes the basic difference between a pre-determined and an *open form* musical piece. In the first case the composer conceives an object in its wholeness. This object has a complete and closed form, and it could be conceived as a balanced organic whole. In the second case the composer creates a field of possibilities for the performer(s). He provides material, which performers should use to build their own version.

¹ Eco refers to *Klavierstueck XI* by Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Sequenza for solo flute* by Luciano Berio, *Scambi* by Henri Pousseur and *Third Sonata for piano* by Pierre Boulez.

Reginald Smith Brindle (1975: 70) honed the description of a piece which is not 'an object in time, having a beginning, a middle, and an ending' (Cage 1968: 36) using the term *indeterminacy in form*. Brindle refers to five different categories of indeterminacy:

- *Indeterminacy in Tempo* (meaning the temporal applications of indeterminacy)
- *Pitch Indeterminacy* (when the notes are not defined by the composer)
- *Indeterminacy in Form* (when the composer does not define the form of the piece)
- *Indeterminacy in expression* (meaning dynamics, timbre, musical nuances of a piece)
- *Indeterminacy of material means* (when the composer is 'deliberately imprecise in the actual instrumental or vocal forces' he prefers)

This categorization is important, because according to Brindle, whether the form of a musical composition is pre-determined by the composer or not is independent of the use of indeterminacy for other basic parameters (pitch, tempo, rhythm, expression or means of performance), and consequently from the fixing of the sonic result of the piece.² Furthermore, even when indeterminacy is happening at the time of composition, like in the case of chance compositional techniques introduced by John Cage, the overall form of the piece could be 'closed' and pre-determined by the composer.³ Indeterminacy in form is also independent from the notation used. There are open form pieces with conventional staff notation, or pieces with pre-

² Early examples of using different types of indeterminacy while the overall form is fixed by the composer are the graphic pieces for solo and ensemble performance, which Morton Feldman created between 1950 and 1967. In his *Intersection 1* (1951), Feldman uses pitch and dynamics indeterminacy, as well as indeterminacy concerning the exact placement of a tone within a time frame, but the overall form of the piece is determined by him.

³ Also in this case, like in *Music of Changes* (1951) by Cage, despite the indeterminate nature of composition, the overall form of the piece is pre-determined by the composer.

determined overall form with conventional, verbal or graphic notation where indeterminacy occurs only in some of the basic sound parameters.

The result of indeterminacy in form is referred to in the music literature as *mobile composition* (Brown in Cox & Warner 2004: 194), *mobile form* (Griffiths 1995: 104-115; Johnson 2011: 9), *open form* (Campbell 2013: 17-18; Dack in Heile ed. 2009: 178-180; Morgan 1991: 368; Dahlhaus 1987: 261-264; Brindle 1975: 70), *work in movement* (Eco 1989: 13), *variable form* (Johnson in Nicholls ed. 1997: 88; Morgan 1991: 368; Gieseler 1975: 139) or *multidimensional form* (Gieseler 1975: 139). 'Mobile form' and 'open form' were the terms that predominated, with the latter becoming the most common.

Open form pieces changed the relationship between performer and composer and between performers within a group. Eco notes that players performing a composition with closed form would be 'more or less obliged to reproduce the format devised by the composer' (1989: 4). The composer is the leading figure and the performer should follow the decisions made by him/her. The player is not a collaborator, at least when it comes to the structure of the form. S/he just has to perform the composer's ideas. In contrast, in open form pieces performers could act creatively within the field of possibilities created by the composer and take their individual or group decisions as to how they are going to structure their version of the composition. They would not work 'for' the composer but 'with' the composer, completing the puzzle provided by him/her.

In the case of the preparation and performance of an open form piece for a group, some research questions emerge, often neglected in the related literature:

- Who takes the necessary decisions regarding the construction of the form?
- When are these decisions taken?

- How would the nature of these decisions affect the relationships between performer and composer and between performers?

Investigating who makes the decisions about the structure of an open form piece's version is a first step in researching two parameters of musical composition for groups that are often overlooked by composers:

- The way a score encourages individuality or collaboration and collective decisions between the participants.
- The consequences of the composer's decision regarding the relationship between composer-performer and between performers as well as the kinds of creativity which are encouraged.

Who is going to take the necessary decisions regarding the structure of an open form piece's version and when these decisions are to be made can influence in a dramatic way the relationships between composer-performer and between performers (in comparison with the same relationships in a piece with closed form). In this research I attempt to make clear which types of decisions encourage 'musical independence' (Wolff in Saunders ed. 2009: 361) between composer and performer, as well as the types of decisions that encourage either individuality or collaboration and collective decisions between performers in a group. I investigate also how the composer's decision on this topic can encourage either individual creativity or a kind of creativity that can become an attribute of the group as a whole (Sawyer 2003: 25) and not only of individuals.

My creative (and theoretical) research primarily focuses on the case where performers as a group take the necessary decisions on structuring an open form piece's version. It researches the ways group members behave and the kind of decisions they made, individually as well as collectively, when they are working that way. It also investigates the growth of a creativity which is an attribute of the group as a whole and especially the appearance of the

conditions for the potential growth of a *Groupmind* (Forsyth 2010: 17) using a theoretical model introduced by the social psychologist Keith Sawyer (2008). Finally, I attempt to describe the possible consequences that this kind of working could have in the real life of the people that take part in the preparation and performance of my open form pieces.

By researching a number of open form pieces, one can come to the conclusion that in most cases the decisions regarding the way such pieces should be performed are being made either *prior to, or during the performance*. Generally the decisions about the form could be made by

- the composer
- performers individually
- the performers as a group
- a representative or representatives of the group
- a third party (e.g. a director)

There are cases that resist a categorisation like this. A composer could rehearse together with the performers and maybe s/he could influence, consciously or unconsciously, their decisions on structuring an open form piece. An example of this kind of attitude is the way Karlheinz Stockhausen worked with different ensembles on his verbal pieces from the collections *Aus den sieben Tagen* (1968) and *Aus kommenden Zeiten* (1968/70) trying to control the final result of the performance despite the openness of the scores (Maconie 2005: 311/12; Iddon 2004). Furthermore, composers sometimes participate in the performance of their compositions along with other performers. This represents a nebulous situation as, even when the composer does not intend to influence his/her co-players, they could be influenced because of his/her status as the composer.

There are also pieces that resist strict categorisation, because the composers give instructions that could lead to different kinds of preparations and

performances. A well-known example of open form which gives different alternatives for the preparation and performance is *Twenty-Five Pages* (1953) for 1 to 25 Pianos by Earle Brown. The pages of the score may be played in any sequence, either side up, and the staff notation may be read as either treble or bass clef. The time structure, that would obviously influence the form, 'may be pre-set by the performer, obtained from the composer or be arrived at spontaneously during the performance' (Brown 1974). In other words, decisions about the time structure and the form can be made either prior to or during performance by the players. Finally, composers often do not give any instructions for how the players should organize their version of the piece. This is, one could say, the commonest case. Composers let people decide if they are going to form their version collectively, individually or if a person or persons are going to decide for them.

Furthermore, the temporal relation between the decisions regarding form and performance affects the nature of the decisions themselves. One can observe different kinds of decisions depending on whether they are made prior to or during the performance of an open form piece. The following parts investigate these issues.

1.2 Taking decisions prior to the performance

1.2.1 Composer decides

The potential for open form in compositions for groups has been used often in a rather restricted way. Some composers, provided:

- pre-composed sections that players could insert into a pre-determined overall form or
- concrete alternative 'paths' for the performance of an open form composition

In *Structures II* for two pianos (1956-61) by Pierre Boulez 'a limited range of choice is allowed within a carefully prescribed larger plan' (Morgan 1991: 373). In *Structures II* performers may insert

an entire separated "movement" [...] into the work's ongoing structure [...] yet this movement, if used, constitutes only a temporary interruption – rather like a cadenza – within a fixed and precisely controlled larger musical argument. (Ibid.)

Boulez was at first cautious and later hostile concerning form indeterminacy. His attitude based on his belief that

If the player were an inventor of forms or of primary musical material, he would be a composer. If he is not a composer, it is because he is by choice and capacity a performer; (Boulez 1986: 461)

European composers like Mauricio Kagel, Dieter Schnebel, Luciano Berio, Roman Haubenstock-Ramati provide us, already during the 1950s, examples of open form pieces where the players are given concrete alternative ways for performing them. *Anagrama für vier Gesangssoli, Sprechchor und Kammerensemble* (1957/58) by Kagel is a composition in five parts (I, II, III, IV, V) which can be played in two possible orders: I, II, III, IV, V, or V, IV, III, II, I.

Kagel did not concern himself in particular with the notion of open form because he believed that 'however open the form may be on paper, it is closed in performance because the listener only hears one version at a time' (Williams 2013: 10). In other words he shifted the emphasis away from composed form to articulation on the part of the listener (Ibid.).

During the same period, Schnebel tried to control an open form environment in his piece *Für Stimmen (...missa est)* (1956/58) in a similarly simple way. This is a *cyclic* composition. Performers can begin with any section and they should end with the preceding one. Kagel worked in a similar way in his *Musik für Renaissance-Instrumente* (1965/66). According to the instructions given:

The work is divided into 11 sections (A,B,C,...K). The performance may begin with any section, continuing in cyclic succession and ending at the thick double bar line before the section with which the performance began (for example G,H,I,J,K,A,...F). (Kagel 1970)

A different approach to concrete alternative paths provided by the composer can be found in Berio's orchestral work *Epifanie* (1959/61). This is a collection of seven short orchestral pieces and five vocal sections with

texts by different writers.⁴ Berio provided five different sequences for the orchestral pieces (which they can perform separately) and ten different permutations for the combination of the orchestral and vocal material. It was crucial to Berio to provide specific combinations of the material because the chosen order ‘will emphasize the apparent heterogeneity of the texts or their dialectical unity’ (Berio, cited in Griffiths 1995: 114). In his own recording of the work, he chose a combination which presented ‘a gradual passage from a lyric transfiguration of reality (Proust, Machado, Joyce) to a disenchanted acknowledgment of things (Simon)’ (Ibid.). Berio used indeterminacy in pitch and dynamics in some of his works, but he generally avoided using indeterminacy in form. Even *Epifanie* was revised in 1991/92 and transformed to a closed form piece. After the mid-sixties, Berio (as well as other European composers like Boulez) showed a general disenchantment with mobile form (Griffiths 1995: 114).

In contrast to Berio, Haubenstock-Ramati created a large number of pieces with open form using different notations and restrictions.⁵ An early example is *Multiple 1* (1969), in which the score consists of a single page with five layers (A, B, C, D, E). One of the two players should read the layers from top to bottom and other player from bottom to top, so that the following alternatives emerge. Each player reads the page twice.

Player 1	Player 2
ABCDE	EDCBA
BCDEA	DCBAE

⁴ The texts of the vocal pieces have been taken from Marcel Proust (*À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*), Antonio Machado (*Nuevas Canciones*), James Joyce (*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*), Edoardo Sanguineti (*Triperuno*), Claude Simon (*La route des Flandres*), and Bertolt Brecht (*An die Nachgeborenen*).

⁵ Examples include *Interpolation-mobile per flute (1,2,et 3)* (1957), *Liaisons* (1958), *Jeux 6* (1960), *Jeux 2* (1968), *catch 1* (1968), *catch 2* (1968), *Hexachord 1 und 2* (1977)

CDEAB	CBAED
DEABC	BAEDC
EABCD	AEDCB

Haubenstock-Ramati categorized the different kinds of form as ‘closed’, ‘open’ or ‘dynamically closed’ forms. The open form is for Haubenstock-Ramati ‘from beginning to end a ceaseless flow of continually new events, the exposition of perpetually new structures’ (Haubenstock-Ramati 1965: 43). The dynamically closed form pieces presented according to him a ‘variable and mobile form, which can be designated as “constant variation by means of repetition”’ (Ibid.). Composers did not use terms like open, mobile, and variable in a consistent way. Different composers used them in different ways to describe their various methods of working using open form.

Another approach to choosing alternative paths provided by the composer is to allow performers to decide independently to create individual versions. In Carl Bergstrøm-Nielsen’s *Game of Contrasts* (1980) the score consists of one page containing a short paragraph of instructions and nine different squares (marked with the numbers 1 to 9), with nine different types of sounds and sound situations. Under each square there is one to three numbers, indicating options for the performers regarding their paths through the squares. Bergstrøm-Nielsen instructs the performers to use the material independently, ‘beginning with number 1 and proceeding individually from square to square according to figures’ (Bergstrøm-Nielsen 1980) provided. Therefore, when a member of a group performs his/her own path through the score it is not likely that s/he knows what the other members of the group are playing. Instructions given such as ‘hard sound’ or ‘soft sound’, as well as procedures provided such as ‘think of something specific and play something else’ (Ibid.) cannot have objective sonic results, recognizable by each member of the group. Thus, each member follows their individual path influenced or not by the sounds of their co-players, building

their own 'form' of the piece, probably without knowing how their co-players will form their performance. The only 'common agreement' (Ibid.) the group has to make deals with the way the piece is going to end.

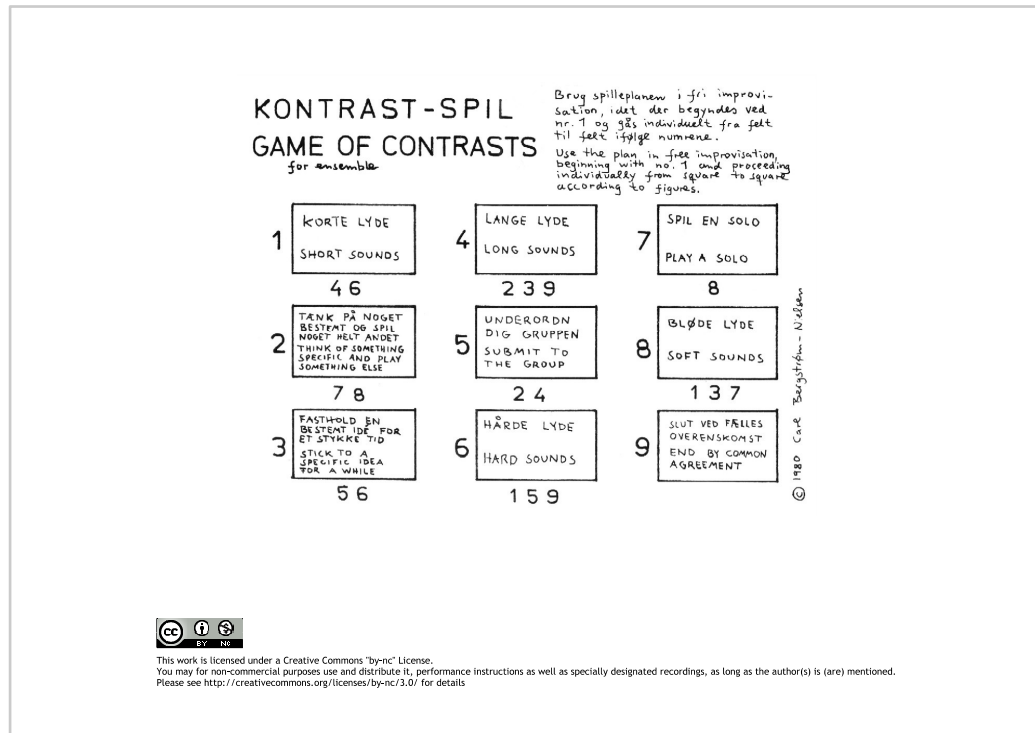


Figure 1: C. Bergstrom-Nielsen, *Game of Contrasts* (1980)

The restricted use of open form could present:

- A kind of diffidence on the part of the composer to trust the ability of the performer(s) to construct their own form from the material provided, like in the cases of Boulez and Berio. It is, one could say, a half-hearted attempt to use form mobility but at the same time controlling the final sound product to maximum extent.
- A game element, like in the piece by Bergstrøm-Nielsen.

The use of pre-determined alternative paths provided by a composer does not leave much space for creative thinking, at least concerning the form of the piece. In *Musik für Renaissance-Instrumente* and *Epifanie* the conductor

takes all the decisions regarding the path to be followed. Therefore players follow the decisions made by others, keeping the relationship between composer and performer similar to that of a piece with closed form (especially if there is no use of pitch, duration, dynamics or timbre indeterminacy). In *Game of Contrasts*, however, the individual performer takes the necessary decisions. The composer becomes the creator of a field of opportunities that the individual performer can use to decide on the structure of his/her performance.

The relationships between performers present a more complex situation. In Boulez's *Structure II* or Haubenstock-Ramati's *Multiple 1* performers may have to collaborate in some way in the preparation of the form of their version, even if the composers do not ask for this kind of collaboration explicitly. In the pieces by Berio, Schnebel and Kagel though, performers follow the decisions made by others (the composer and the conductor). They can potentially play their parts without caring too much about what their co-players are performing. This situation resembles the situation one could encounter in the preparations and performance of a closed form piece.⁶ In the piece by Bergstrøm-Nielsen, individual performers decide on their own paths but they cannot really know what their co-players are playing. They could be influenced by the total sound or by the actions of their co-players, but they do not know how they will form their performance. In other words performers can be creative in an individualistic way. Consequently, one could say that in those cases individual creativity is cultivated but not creativity based in collaboration and collective decisions.

⁶ This is not to say that the collaboration observed when, for example, a string quartet or a non-conducted ensemble performs a closed form piece, should be undervalued. It simply emphasises that performers in such cases *could* act in an individualistic way.

1.2.2 Director or representative(s) of the group decide

Some composers leave the responsibility for constructing the version of an open form piece to one or more directors. Doing that prior to the performance means that the director would have to create a plan. In *For 24 Winds* (1966) by Lukas Foss, the director has to decide with which of the 12 available sound events he would like to begin the performance, and then to proceed according to the performance plan provided by the composer. Following this performance plan he would have to predetermine all the necessary information (beats, tempo, dynamics) prior to the performance.

The decision to leave the responsibility of constructing the version of an open form piece to a director is similar to the decision to provide pre-determined alternative paths. It shows diffidence on the part of the composer in allowing the performers to take their own decisions. The composer seems to place trust in one person, a director, more than the group of performers collectively. Furthermore, the director should decide prior to the performance and not spontaneously during the performance. In a piece like *For 24 Winds*, since all the decisions concerning the form are taken by a director, the relationship between performer and composer and between performers remains similar to that of a piece in closed form. This way of working does not encourage any kind of collective decisions on the part of performers.

A less common case is when a composer asks the performers to select a representative or representatives of the group, who is/are going to decide on the form of the piece. An example of this method is *Burdocks* (1971) by Christian Wolff. *Burdocks* consists of ten sections 'not all of which need be played in any one performance' (Wolff 1973), an instruction leaving the forming of the piece in the players' hands. The composer determines the minimum number of players for each section and invites them to 'gather and decide, or choose one or more representatives to decide what sections will

be played and in what arrangement' (Wolff 1973). In addition, performers or representative(s) must also decide how many players will make up an 'orchestra'⁷ for a section; how many orchestras will play a given section; which orchestra will play which section and when (in what sequences, overlapping or simultaneous combinations).

In this particular case, where the composer asks performers to choose representative(s), we can observe a first step on the part of the composer to give the performers the responsibility of constructing the form. This approach is also a step towards 'musical independence', as Wolff says (Saunders ed. 2009: 361), between composer and performer. It changes the position of power between composer and performer and therefore their relationship. Performers become collaborators of the composer and not merely executors of the piece's material.

This collective way of deciding on the representative(s) assigns the performers more responsibilities concerning the forming of a piece, and it changes the relationship between them too. They will have to build (even temporarily) a team and make decisions collectively.

1.2.3 Performer decides individually

In open form pieces, one can observe cases where the composer asks performers to create their individual plans using the material provided and perform them simultaneously with the plans of their co-players. John Cage was one of the first composers who cultivated this way of working. A comparison of the performance instructions of three open form scores composed by him is revealing. In *Theatre Piece* (1960), *Cartridge Music*

⁷ Wolff uses the term 'orchestra' to denote ensembles of different sizes.

(1960) and *Songbooks* (1970) Cage overtly asks performers to prepare their parts independently.

Theatre Piece consists of eight individual parts for one to eight performers.

Using the score materials, each performer makes an independent 30-minute program of action. *Theatre Piece* may be performed as a solo or consist of up to eight independent participants, each using a different score. (Fetterman 1996: 105)

In other words, performers could work individually to prepare their own performance plan that could simply coexist simultaneously with the plans of their co-players during performance. There is no explicitly expressed restriction of collaboration between the performers, but the eight different parts and the way Cage addressed his instructions to each performer separately – ‘The performer is to prepare’ (Cage 1960) – implies that most probably Cage had in mind that performers would work on their own. The instructions suggest that even during performance individual decisions are cultivated. Cage writes: ‘A rehearsal will have the purpose of removing physically dangerous obstacles that may arise due to the unpredictability involved’ (Ibid.). There is no stated need for the participants to combine their parts, neither in a performance score, nor during performance. Rehearsing is just a way to set the stage up in a way that would be safe for the performers to act.⁸

In his *Cartridge Music* Cage encourages individual decisions even more clearly during the preparation and the performance of the piece. He writes in the instructions that ‘(e)ach performer makes his own part from the material supplied’ (Cage, 1960). Although some kind of collaboration

⁸ An anonymous review of the first performance of the piece in 1960 described the performance as a situation with rather complicated simultaneous events (Fetterman 1996: 108)

between players is not explicitly excluded, the performance practice by John Cage and David Tudor, who performed the composition as a duo numerous times, shows that each one of them had his own score (Fetterman 1996: 61-63), which was performed simultaneously with the other one. A review by Peter Yates in 1964 states that each performer was 'following a different sequence of events' (Yates cited in Fetterman 1996: 65). In addition, Christian Wolff, who was one of the performers in the premiere in 1960, stresses that

the performance depends upon the individuals involved, partly because of the individual score readings, and partly because of the unpredictability of actual performance. (Wolff cited in Fetterman 1996: 66)

Cage goes a step further towards this direction in his *Song Books* (1970). This composition includes 90 different parts for solo voice, which 'may be used by one or more singers' (Cage 1970). According to the instructions:

Any number of solos in any order and any superimposition may be used. [...] Given two or more singers, each should make an independent program, not fitted or related in a predetermined way to anyone else's program. Any resultant silence in a program is not to be feared. Simply perform as you had decided to, before you knew what would happen. (Cage 1970)

In other words if two or more singers are involved in a performance of the piece, they do not form 'an ensemble'. One could say that they are rather as Cage puts it elsewhere: 'A lot of people working together without getting in each other's way' (Cage & Charles 1995). They should act as soloists that perform simultaneously with other soloists.

Cage was interested 'in unpredictable events and simultaneities arising from disciplined actions' (Chase 2006: 15). Through the individual preparation of the performers' parts in pieces like *Cartridge Music* 'a spontaneous, indeterminant (sic) situation among performers arises over and above that initially supplied by the composer' (Gena 1981). Gena (Ibid.) suggests that players

make changes in intensity and tone on the amplifiers throughout the entire piece. As the performers follow their parts to determine when to produce sounds, they may accidentally reinforce or cancel sounds of others while controlling intensity. (Ibid.)

Cage's credo of letting 'sounds be themselves rather than vehicles for man-made theories or expressions of human sentiments' (Cage 1968: 10) was in accordance with such results. By allowing performers to create their own performance material, he tried to remove his intentionality from the resulting piece of music. Moreover, as Miller points out, 'by specifying that they construct their parts independently, he also removed theirs' (in Nicholls 2002: 167). The resulting work in pieces like *Cartridge Music*, *Double Music*, the Black Mountain happening, *Variations V* and *Reunion* is a collaboration between the composer, who provided the material, and the players, who choose the way of performing it. In such pieces 'the intersection of these intentions is determined by factors out of the control of any individual contributor' (Ibid.).

A recent example of a piece that invites performers to take individual decisions, prior to the performance, using verbally described categories of elements provided by the composer is the score *A Great War* (2013) by Joseph Kudirka. During the preparation of performance players should make two important decisions collectively. They have to choose a historical war, which 'establishes a time-frame from which material may be culled for performance' (Kudirka 2013) and the total duration of the performance.

Within this duration 'each participant creates his/her own part from their chosen elements'. The categories of elements provided by Kudirka are:

- *Libretto*, meaning 'any text or portion of a text written or first published during the war'.
- *Score*, meaning 'playback of any audio recorded or performance of music composed or published during the war'.
- *Visual imagery*, meaning 'any film/video/etc produced during the war' (Ibib.).

Each performer should use elements from the above categories to create their own part. The elements should be presented chronologically. This kind of working is compatible with the desire of Kudirka to produce pieces, the identity of which he could not predict prior to performance (Kudirka 2012: 156).

Letting the individual performer decide on structuring an open form piece changed the relationship between composer and performer (compared to the same relationship in a closed form piece). The composer provides the players with a 'field of opportunities', as Heinz-Klaus Metzger pointed out describing the music of Cage, already in 1959 (Metzger in Robinson 2011: 14). Performers can determine the narrative of the piece and construct their own personal version. The composer becomes a facilitator of the creativity of the individual performer, respecting and trusting their decisions and outcomes.

Performers could act in an individualistic way and do not necessarily have to collaborate with their co-players when they plan their version. In extreme cases like *Song Books*, a player is a soloist who performs his 'program' independent of the programs of his co-players. This is similar to a performance of a piece with closed form, where players *could* perform their parts, without worrying too much about what the others are playing. In this

way of working, individuality in preparing and performing a composition, instead of collaboration and collective decisions, is encouraged.

1.2.4 Group decides

There are open form pieces for groups where the composer either explicitly or indirectly asks the players to plan their version of the piece collectively prior to the performance. This way of working can be observed in a relatively small number of pieces. In the graphic score *visible music I for 1 Conductor and 1 Instrumentalist* (1960/62) by Dieter Schnebel, conductor and instrumentalist are invited by the composer to prepare collectively their version of this graphic piece. In order to do this they must

make themselves familiar with the notation sheet and its respective gestural and instrumental interpretation, and then co-operate in an investigation of the possibilities of playing together, the result of which they can use as a basis for their performance. (Schnebel 1971)

Similar to Schnebel's piece, in the graphic composition *Constantly on the edge of a breakdown* (1977) by Erik Christensen, players are instructed to get together and rehearse collectively the graphic structures provided by the score one by one, 'so as to get to know each structure and be able to remember a number of possible realisations' (Christensen 1977). Christensen invites the players to rehearse different overall forms and to meticulously plan in detail versions 'with different degrees of freedom' (Ibid.).

Collective decisions are requested in a more direct and simple way by Christian Wolff in his ensemble piece *Burdocks* (1971). As noted, one of the alternative ways for structuring the form of *Burdocks* (1971) is that the

players can 'gather and decide what section will be played and in what arrangement' (Wolff 1973). Wolff was interested in engaging the players more actively in the structure of their performance. The decision of leaving the construction of form to the performers had a political meaning for Wolff. He stated that

the techniques of coordination, interaction and interdependency, all players being equal (really, the normal thing in chamber music), and the sharing out of musical independence between composer and performers – that can have a metaphorical or exemplary force: social democracy. (Wolff cited in Saunders 2009: 361)

This does not mean that in writing music everything should convey a political message. Such a thing, as Wolff says, 'could be a musical disaster, and so also a political one' (Ibid.). In Wolff's music the parameters of a musical composition, such as the manner in which the performance is prepared, should take place with a conscious awareness 'of good democratic principles' (Ibid.).

Agnes Ponizil is also direct in the instructions of her graphic score *Three Intensities* (1995), which is part of a collection of pieces made by members of *Group Improfon*.⁹ Performers of this graphic piece have to create a sonic texture, which consists of three sections with 'different density or musical intensity: not very dense – middle density – very dense' (Ponizil 1995). Ponizil later notes that the 'sequence of the different densities is to be determined beforehand by a common discussion among the interpreters' (Ponizil 1995). The given intensities have to be musically translated by 'each interpreter', an instruction that leads to an individual way of preparing the

⁹ *Group Improfon* is a Dresden (Germany) based ensemble, consisted by Hartmut Dorschner (sax), Sabine Grüner (vc), Günther Heinz (tb), Agnes Ponizil, Jörg Ritter (perc). *Three intensities* is part of the collection of graphic scores entitled *Antology* (1994/95).

Source: <http://intuitivemusic.dk/iima/if.pdf>

musical material of each performer. However, the overall form, as well as the duration of their version has to be decided collectively prior to the performance.

In these cases the composer 'proposes specific possibilities of action to the musicians and, if one wants to define it at all, is nothing but a field of possibilities' (Metzger in Robinson 2011: 14). This changes the relationship between composer and performer dramatically. The composer becomes a facilitator of the creativity of the performers, respecting and trusting their decisions and outcomes.

The collective decisions required in such pieces also dramatically change the relationship between performers. They do not just 'perform' their part or follow their individually prepared path. Performers are invited to build a team (even temporarily), and to discuss, negotiate and come to a decision (at least) concerning the form of a piece. In these cases the creative process moves from the person to the group and this provides a fertile ground for a kind of creativity to grow that cannot be defined as a property of individuals but as a 'property of groups' (Sawyer 2003: 25).

1.3 Taking decisions during performance

1.3.1 Composer decides

It is less common in an open form composition for the composer to take decisions that influence the form of the piece during performance. The composer could do that by giving instructions during the performance (in which case he is no longer just a composer but a kind of conductor or performer too), or by electronic means.

John Cage was one of the first composers who tried to interfere through electronic means with the sound result of an open form score made by him. The performance of his composition *Atlas Eclipticalis* (1961/62) in the 'avant garde' concerts of the New York Philharmonic (together with compositions by Brown and Feldman) in 1964 was a first attempt. In this composition Cage

laid bands of transparent paper over the celestial maps in a 1958 Czechoslovakian astronomical atlas, the *Atlas Eclipticalis*. He inscribed on the transparencies what he could see through them – the position and size of the stars, their relative brightness determining the dynamics of the musical notes they became. (Silverman 2010:180)

The 86 independent instrumental parts may be played in whole or in part, for any duration, by any number of players and combination of instruments. It may also be combined with *Winter Music*, a piano composition consisting of 20 pages in which Cage marked a solid note head 'wherever he found an imperfection in the paper'. Then 'he overlaid the results with a staff that

turned the note heads into notes' (Holzäpfel in Nicholls 2002:176) leaving clefs, rhythm, dynamics, order and total length indeterminate.

In the concert of the New York Philharmonic, Cage wanted to create 'a Brobdingnagian electronic version of *Atlas Eclipticalis*' (Miller 2001:549). To achieve that, he planned to provide each instrument with a contact microphone and to feed the output of each instrument into a single mixer. The mixer was build by Max Mathews and Phil Giordano of the Bell labs, and for practical reasons each instrument had its own microphone, 'but the signals from two players were combined into a single channel feed' (Ibid. 549). Cage and James Tenney operated controls on the mixer. Their operation was not based on a score but on spontaneous decisions by the two composers.

Leonard Bernstein was the conductor of the concert. According to his description

...every instrument of the orchestra has a contact microphone attached to it so that the notes they play will be further subjected to random choices of the composer and his assistant who will be seated at the electronic controls. Thus the composer, at the switchboard, is ultimately responsible for what comes out over the various loudspeakers. (Ibid. 550)

The concert did not go well. The Philharmonic instrumentalists were supposed to play through the piece for eight minutes. However, when the musicians found out that their microphones could be turned on and off randomly they reacted with hostility. They deliberately sabotaged the piece (Wolff in Silverman 2010: 202). Instead of playing the score, many of them improvised, 'ran through scales, quoted other works, talked, fooled with the electronic devises or simply sat on the stage without playing' (Ibid.).

Cage and his collaborator James Tenney managed this complicated sound design, working at the mixing desk, trying to adjust 50 separate mixer controls (Miller 2001: 551). Regardless of the success of the project and the difficulties of controlling the electronic equipment and design, Cage and Tenney did try to interfere with the sonic result using the mixer control during the performance. Of course they could not 'control' the sonic result in a deterministic way. Their contribution should be observed in the context 'of Cage's desire to create aesthetic products that reflected multiple intentionalities – or perhaps unintentionalities' (Miller 2001: 562). In this work Cage superimposed the inputs of a large number of imaginative personalities – his way of making 'counterpoint'. Each participant could influence the sonic result and none could control it completely. As Bernstein noted in his introduction to the Philharmonic concert of *Atlas Eclipticalis*

No member of the orchestra ... know[s] when he will predominate over the others, over his colleagues, or for that matter, whether he'll be heard at all. (Bernstein in Miller 2001: 562)

Nevertheless, by controlling the mixer Cage and his collaborator gave the final touch to the sonic result of this complicated sound design, taking their decisions during the performance.

In this case the indeterminate features of the score gave some liberties to the performers (which they did not use sensibly in this case) and made the composer the provider of a field of opportunities. The composer and his assistant were the people responsible for controlling the final form of the piece. The instrumentalists prepared and performed their parts individually. In this respect *Atlas Eclipticalis* has characteristics similar to any closed form piece with regards to the relationship between performers. As in the case where the composer decides prior to the performance by providing alternative paths, here also individual instead of collective decisions between players is encouraged.

1.3.2 Director or third person decides.

Earle Brown was one of the first composers who used open form with one or more directors being responsible for forming the piece during the performance. He used this way of composing in a number of pieces throughout his oeuvre.¹⁰ *Available Forms I for chamber ensemble* (1961) is one of the earliest examples of this approach. In the instructions Brown states:

The conductor may begin a performance with any event on any page and may proceed from any page to any other page at any time, with or without repetitions or omissions of pages or events, remaining on any page or event as long as he wishes. (Brown 1962)

In his piece *From Here* (1963) Brown asks for the collaboration of two directors, one for the orchestra and one for the chorus. The orchestra director is primarily responsible for the 'forming' of the work during performance. He may use any sequence for the 14 sound-events provided by Brown or 'he may give a cue to the chorus director to begin with a vocal event' (Brown 1972). After cueing the chorus director

the conductor of the orchestra cannot be exactly certain of which chorus event will be forthcoming [...] he then responds with orchestral sound-events which seem complementary and appropriate. (Ibid.)

What Brown describes here is collaborative feedback between the two directors, which determines the structure of the piece and its development.

¹⁰ Brown uses open form in compositions such as: *Available Forms I* (1961), *Novara* (1962), *From here* (1963), *Modules I-II* (1966), *event – synergy II* (1967), *Available Forms II* (1962) – *Time Spans* (1972) – *Sign Sounds* (1972) – *Folio II* (1982) – *Souder Rounds* (1983) – *Tracer* (1985) – *OH, K* (1992)

This indirect collaboration between the two directors cannot be better described than with Brown's own words:

Both conductors conduct simultaneously but independently. This 'independence' is of course conditioned by the coexistence of the other group, and, ultimately, is a collaborative and dependent process. It must be understood that this is *one* composition for essentially *one* group, a performance of which is the product of sympathetic musical collaboration between the two conductors in relation to the composed material and its formal potential. (Ibid.)

Brown often conducted his own open form pieces, and this in part explains why he left often the responsibility of forming a piece to the director.¹¹ However, Brown also suggests there is a more social aspect to this work. He asserts that the decision to permit the forming of a piece to be influenced by the individual sensitivities of other people is supported by his belief in seeking the 'collaborative poetics of "music making"' (Brown n.d.). This seeking was confirmed 'in the human musicality of Bruno Maderna' (Ibid.), who conducted his *Available Forms I* and to whom his 'first co-conducted orchestral work is dedicated and inspired by: *Available Forms II* (1962)' (Ibid.).

An example where more than two directors are involved is *GEOD for Large Orchestra (in four groups) with optional Choir* (1969) by Lukas Foss. In this piece there are four directors (each for an orchestral group), a percussion group and a principal fifth director. The principal conductor is responsible for giving cues to the remaining four sub-directors or to the percussion group to start playing. His task is 'to mix the four musics in varying

¹¹ Bruno Maderna conducted the premiere of his *Available Forms I* and Hans Zender the premiere of his *Time Spans* (source: <http://www.earle-brown.org/>)

combinations and unpredictable durations, blotting out now this, now that group' (Foss n.d.). In this way the principal director

is literally "composing" the music at performance, in a spontaneous, non-predetermined manner, by deciding what should be heard, when, and in combination with what. (Ibid.)

Foss gives another instruction: if the work is to be recorded, then the job of the principle director is taken over by the person responsible for the mixer in the recording studio. By gating music in and out he can change the recorded performance. Foss explains why he composed the piece in open form, saying that composing had become for him working in a way that the resulting music is what he wanted it to be 'regardless of *what* emerges *when*, or *what* vanishes *when*' (Ibid.). This means that any sonic result of a situation where the principal director cues the sub-directors in and out, the person on the mixer 'gates now this, now that music and the listener emphasizes the channel on the right or the one on the left, *all* is valid and therefore correct (hopefully, beautiful)' (Ibid.).

A piece that depends heavily on the interactions between a group of improvisers and a 'director' (who in this case is called a 'prompter' by the composer) is *Cobra* (1984) by John Zorn. The prompter should be thought

as a guide who (most of the time) responds to the performers and the musical directions they wish to follow. The prompter responds to requests made by the players by relaying information to the other members of the ensemble and while the prompter often functions as a conduit of information, she/he can choose to ignore requests by the players. (Brackett 2010: 49-50)

The score of *Cobra* is a list of 19 possible ‘cues’ available to the performers.¹² The sonic material used during the performance of the cues is left entirely to the players. The cues

describe an event or action that can be called by a player (“caller”) through a specific bodily motion (e.g., hand signals, pointing) that is relayed to the prompter who can either accept or decline the cue. (Brackett 2010:49-50)

Describing the interactions between players and between the players and prompter Zorn says that

It was the players themselves who were making the decisions. If there was something you wanted to have happen, you could make it happen. And so the pieces slowly evolved into complex on-and-off systems, dealing only with *when* musicians play and *with* whom. Musicians relating to musicians. (Zorn 2004: 199)

This sounds like a case where the individual performer takes the decisions about forming his performance. However, despite the potential numerous kinds of interactions between players and between the players and prompter, it is the latter that takes the final decision as to how the piece develops. While the prompter will be influenced by the calls made by the players, and so the players are also responsible for forming the piece in an

¹² The score of *Cobra* is not available in its complete form. A reproduction of the score is presented as part of the article ‘Der Architekt der Spiele: Gespräch mit John Zorn über seine musikalischen Regelsystem’, in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 152 (Feb. 2, 1991): 33–37. Brief descriptions of the rules can be found also in an interview with Zorn conducted by Edward Strickland in *American Composers*, 135–37 (1988). A color reproduction of the score was included on the double-LP release of John Zorn, *Cobra*, HatHut Records hatART 2034 (1987) and in the CD tray to John Zorn, *Cobra*, Tzadik TZ 7335 (2002).

indirect way, the final decision is his/her hands. The prompter is responsible for the form of a version of *Cobra*.¹³

In all those cases, responsible for the resulting form of the version are the directors (in the case of *Cobra*, the 'prompter') and not the individual performer or the group. In some of Brown's works performers have the opportunity to act creatively by taking individual decisions about pitch or dynamics. However, the director(s) decide when the players are going to perform and in what combination. In those cases the relationship between performer and composer remains similar to a piece with closed form, where performers do not take any decisions about the form.

In Zorn's game pieces all sound material is in the hands of the performers. However, players do not take any final decisions concerning the form of the piece. They try to influence the prompter by asking to receive the permission to begin with a cue but the final decision belongs to the prompter. However, even if the prompter is the one who decides, s/he is in constant interaction with the players. In addition, if one considers that Zorn very often conducts *Cobra* himself, one understands that the relationship between the composer and the player is based on interaction and negotiation during the performance. When Zorn conducts *Cobra* he is a composer who does not take his decisions alone in the time vacuum of the musical composition process but in a live negotiation with the musicians.

Concerning the relationships between performers, the cases of Brown, Foss and Zorn are different. In works by Brown and Foss players could perform

¹³ In the improvisational conducting techniques like the *conduction* technique by Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris or the *Soundpainting* technique by Walter Thompson a similar situation can be observed. A conductor takes the final decisions on the form of a performance, influenced (or not) by the improvisational material used by the players. The difference in these cases is that there is no written score and this is why they are not relevant with this writing.

their parts individually. They do not have to interact with their co-players more than in a piece in closed form. On the contrary, in the case of *Cobra* there are many different kinds of interaction between the players (if the 'prompter' acknowledges the calls by the individual players). This means that the relationship between performers is totally different from a closed form piece. In John Zorn's words

What you get on the stage, then, is not just someone reading music but a *drama*. You get a *human* drama. You get *life itself*, which is what the ultimate musical experience is: it's life. Musicians relating to each other, through music. (Zorn 2004: 198)

Consequently in the cases of Brown or Foss, like in the case of a conductor deciding prior to the performance, there is no special encouragement of collaboration and collective decisions more than in the performance of a piece with closed form. On the contrary, in the case of the game piece by Zorn there is a fertile ground for the group to collaborate during the performance and to interact in many different ways. Despite that there is a real-time creativity through these interactions, the development of the composition is in the hands of the prompter.

1.3.3 Performer decides individually

In other open form works the composer explicitly instructs the players to perform the piece individually and consequently to make decisions regarding the form individually. Jez Riley French's graphic scores such as *for strings-bruxelles* (2009) and *landscapes (then summer) for ensemble* (2010) and *surfaces #2* (2011) invite players to perform his pieces in an intuitive and spontaneous (even instinctive) way. In *for strings-bruxelles* performers should approach the score intuitively, 'allowing the images to form the visual cue for their explorations' (French 2009). Performers have to decide

on duration and tempi in an independent way during the course of the performance 'on an instinctive basis' (Ibid.). In *landscapes (then summer) for ensemble*, French even goes a step further, asking the players to perform the piece without any prior rehearsal.

In French's compositions, players could decide individually on their performance. They do not (have to) collaborate with their co-players prior to or during the performance. In contrast, in Christian Wolff's *Duo for violinist and pianist* (1961) players take individual decisions on the form during performance, in *indirect collaboration* with their co-players. 'Indirect collaboration' indicates a situation where the individual player performs his actions taking cues from another player, who does not know that s/he is giving such cues. This is a standard technique in the compositions by Wolff,¹⁴ and this composition is an early example of using cues to form a piece during performance. The cues are described with instructions like: 'Play as closely together with the next sound you hear as possible, but stop playing before it does' (Wolff 1963).

Pauline Oliveros works in a similar but much more loose way in *Interdependence* (1997) which is included in her verbal score *Four Meditations* (1971-1997). In this piece (as in two other pieces in the same set, *The Tuning Meditation* and *Approaches and Departures*), performers have to make spontaneous decisions regarding the form during performance, in 'indirect collaboration' with their co-players. After all, the title of the piece describes the dependence between things, between performers, between sounds and reactions.

In *Interdependence* there are only two kinds of sounds: a very short staccato sound and a sustained sound with the duration of a breath or a bow length.

¹⁴ Other examples of compositions by Wolff using similar techniques are *Duo for Violinist and Pianist* (1961), *Duet II* (1961), *In between Pieces* (1963), *For 1,2 or 3 people* (1964), *Lines* (1972), *Changing the System* (1973).

Performers have two options: they can either 'send' a sound to their co-players or 'receive' and respond to sounds played by their co-players. To 'send' a sound, performers should play a short staccato sound. To 'receive' they can respond with a short staccato sound, with a sustained sound or with a glissando. No one knows who 'sends' and who 'receives' though. The notions of sending and receiving exist only in the mind of each performer and that is why the piece represents a case of indirect collaboration between performers who take spontaneous individual decisions during performance.

The individual character of the decision-making is described by the instruction that 'each performer decides independently whether to send or to receive' (Oliveros 1996) and that 'players remain autonomous in their decisions to send or receive throughout the meditation' (Ibid.). The spontaneous character of the players' decisions is described by the instruction that a performer should 'react as fast as possible as a receiver. Reaction time is more important than pitch selection' (Ibid.).

Letting the individual performer decide on his/her performance of an open form piece during performance is a step further from letting him/her decide prior to the performance by making a plan. It changes the relationship between composer and performer (compared to the same relationship in a closed form piece) in an even more dramatic way. The composer provides the players with a field of opportunities and trusts their *spontaneous* decisions, which are going to frame their version during performance.

The individualistic way of playing in the pieces by French demonstrated above does not change the relationship between performers. Each performer plays his/her part and does not have to collaborate with his/her co-players, similarly to a performance of a piece in closed form. Therefore collaboration and collective decisions are not encouraged through this way of working. However, in the demonstrated compositions by Wolff and Oliveros, people play 'together' in an indirect way. Even if there is no direct

collaboration between people, one could infer that an 'intuitive' kind of collaboration is present.

1.4 Summary

The decisions about a version of an open form piece could be taken prior to or during performance by the composer, an individual performer, the group or representative(s) of the group, a director or a third party in general. Depending on who might take the decisions, one can observe potential changes in the relationship between composer and performer, and between the performers, as well as the encouragement of individual or collective decisions.

According to the cases discussed here it could be asserted that (compared to the relationships observed in the preparation and performance of a closed form composition) both the relationships between composer and performer and between performers are changed in an open form composition, which

- a. invites performers to decide collectively on the structure of the form or
- b. invites performers to decide collectively on representative(s) of the group

Firstly, open form changes the relationship between composer and performer. The composer does not provide an 'assemblage of sound units' arranged 'in a closed, well-defined manner before presenting it to the listener' (Eco 1989), the format of which performers are obliged more or less to reproduce to the best of their ability. The composer provides a field of possibilities for performers to use in a creative way. Secondly, when performers are invited to work collectively to construct the form (or to choose representative(s) to do so), they have to discuss, negotiate and come to a decision. This process builds teams (even temporally), i.e. groups of people taking collective decisions. In cases where collective work instead of individuality is encouraged and the responsibility for decisions shifts away

from the individual and towards the whole group of performers, then the growth of creativity which is a 'property of the group' (Sawyer 2003: 25) is most probable.

This kind of creativity is called *group creativity*. The following chapter will provide a theoretical framework for the basic dimensions of groups and group creativity that are important for this research. It will also investigate theories concerning the potential growth of a *collective mind* through group creativity.

2. Groups and Collectivity

2.1 Groups: main characteristics and important terms

People are in many respects individuals seeking personal, private objectives, yet they are also members of groups that constrain them, guide them, and sustain them. Members of the species *Homo sapiens* are capable of surviving alone, but few choose to, for virtually all human activities - working, learning, worshiping, relaxing, playing, and even sleeping - occur in groups. To understand people, we must understand their groups (Forsyth 2010: 2)

Some of the most important human activities happen in groups. We are all (consciously or unconsciously) members of different kinds of groups that influence our daily life. We lead groups, leave groups and become members of groups throughout life. Through their membership in groups humans define and confirm their 'values and beliefs and take on or refine a social identity' (Forsyth 2010: 2). In groups humans learn to relate to others, to negotiate, to dispute, to discuss, to disagree, to support their opinions and (hopefully) to agree with others.

There are many different ways of defining what a group is. Forsyth (2010: 3) notes that a group requires at least two people. People in a group should also have some kind of connection. This connection is in most cases 'a socially meaningful one' (Ibid.). Superficial similarities or accidental gathering in the same place are not enough to connect people. Nearly all groups are based on interdependence among their members and their goals. As Kurt Lewin wrote: 'it is not similarity or dissimilarity of individuals that constitutes a group, but interdependence of fate' (Lewin in Burnes 2012: 22).

The social connection between the members of a group is described by different scholars as one of the main characteristics of groups. Sherif et al. (1988: 10) wrote that 'a group is a social unit which consists of a number of individuals who stand in (more or less) definite status and role relationships to one another'; Cartwright & Zander (Forsyth 2010: 4) asserted that 'a group is a collection of individuals who have relations to one another'; and Arrow, McGrath, & Berdahl (2000: 34) commented that a group is 'a bounded set of patterned relations among members'.

Thus, there are many different views concerning the definition of groups. The same applies to the classification of groups according to their specific characteristics. C.H. Cooley (1909) talked about *Primary groups*. These are characterised 'by intimate face to face association and co-operation' (Cooley in Sharma 2007: 127). When the intimacy is not the main group characteristic but its focus is more utilitarian, task-oriented and time-limited (Ogburn and Nimkoff 1950) then researchers talked about a *Secondary or social group*. There are also looser forms of associations among people like *Collectives* (Forsyth 2010: 13) or *Categories* (Galinsky, Ku, and Wang 2005).

Social groups which are 'specifically formed for some purpose' (Smith 2008) are *planned* social groups. One of the main goals that such a group could have and Joseph E. McGrath (1984: 60-66) presents in his *Circumplex Model of Group Tasks*¹⁵ is to execute (perform) a task. This includes taking part in different kinds of competitions (e.g. contests, competitive sports, etc.) or working together to create a product, like the performance of an open form musical work.

¹⁵ The other main group goals are:

- Generating plans
- Choose a solution by solving a problem that has a correct answer
- Negotiate to resolve conflicts of viewpoints or of motive interest

When people are working together to accomplish a task then their interactions can be highly interdependent. Their outcomes can be linked together and in this case ‘the success of any one member of the group will improve the chances of success for the other members’ (Forsyth 2010: 382). Morton Deutsch (1949) called this kind of interaction between members of a group *promotive interdependence* and it is observable when there are no situations which involve competition between group members. When people work in such collaborative way then a *co-operative goal structure* (Benson 2000: 67) is also to observe. This happens when ‘the individual goals of members are visible and similar’ (Forsyth 2010: 382) and there are no hidden agendas and different or opposed goals. Finally, groups are unified by members’ shared desire to accomplish their aims. This constitutes what scholars (Yukelson, Weinberg, and Jackson, 1984; Siebold, 2007) define as *task cohesion*¹⁶.

My compositional work is based on those kinds of interactions and interdependence between people working in groups. The groups of people who took part in performances of compositions in the context of this research were planned task groups which – as I am going to demonstrate through the analysis of interviews in the next chapter of this writing – presented promotive interdependence interactions and co-operative goal structures, as well as task cohesion.

¹⁶ Research (e.g., Casey-Campbell & Martens, 2008; McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 2002; Mudrack, 1989) has shown that because of the different forms of cohesiveness and the numerous functions that it fulfills, there can be no consistency in the explanation of the concept.

2.2 Group Work Issues

Groups are deeply influenced by their formation. According to research (Milliken, Bartel and Kurtzberg in Paulus and Nijstad ed 2003; Milliken and Martins 1996; Williams and O'Reilly 1998) critical factors for the group operation are the backgrounds and traits of the people who comprise the group, commonly referred to as *group diversity*. The way people take their group decisions and the role of minority's or majority's influence on the decisions is also important, as well as the need for a balance between diverse and convergent thinking. Finally, working with other people could also lead to conflicts, and that in turn can influence the way people feel in the group and if they feel free to express themselves.

Diverse groups present a wide range of perspectives on a problem or task, could increase the opportunity for creativity and generate solutions that can potentially be more interesting than those from less diverse groups (e.g. Hoffman and Maier 1961; McLeod and Lobel 1992; Watson, Kumar and Michaelsen 1993). Research has demonstrated that,

products generated in groups with at least two perspectives represented are more original (Van Dyne and Saavedra 1996), more complex (Grünfeld 1995), and more innovative (De Dreu and West 2001; Nemeth 1986) and may be of higher quality (Nemeth, Brown and Rogers 2001). (Milliken, Bartel and Kurtzberg in Paulus and Nijstad ed 2003: 34)

Nevertheless it should be pointed out here that in other studies, researchers asserted that diversity in groups benefits only little in terms of creativity (Bantel and Jackson 1989; Jackson, May and Whitney 1995; Williams and O'Reilly 1998).

In order to select among the available options and putting their ideas into practice, a group needs also to incorporate convergent thinking (Moneta 1994; Torrance 1969). To have an interesting final result one has to plan the setting of the group so that a balance between divergent and convergent thinking will be present.

Even if a group is carefully designed, that does not exclude the possibility for a group to make poor decisions, some of them even resulting in ‘fiascos’ (Janis 1982)¹⁷. Janis (1982) coined the term *groupthink* to describe the case of a group, which makes worse decisions than those that could be made by its members individually. This happens because people ‘strongly desire consensus, even straining for consensus’ (Nemeth and Nemeth-Brown 2003: 64). Groupthink is more likely to arise

from a situation marked by homogeneity of its members, strong and directed leadership, group isolation, and high cohesion. (Nemeth and Nemeth-Brown 2003: 64)

In these cases members could be reluctant to voice dissent and ‘to examine the negative aspects of the preferred position’ (Ibid.). Also alternatives and contingency plans could be banned. Majority influence can be strong and pervasive. Researchers referred to this situation with descriptions that go as far as to describe a ‘tyranny of the majority’ (Mill 1859/1979). The real difficulty with majority views is that, as Nemeth and Nemeth-Brown (2003: 67) wrote, ‘people move to the majority position whether it is right or wrong’. People, who are faced with a unanimous majority, ‘think from the perspective of the majority to the exclusion of other considerations’ (Nemeth 1986). In this case not only one could doubt his/her own position ‘and feels pressure to agree with the majority’, but also one could think

¹⁷ Examples of groupthink ‘fiascos’ studied by Janis included US failures to anticipate the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Bay of Pigs invasion, the escalation of Vietnam war, and the ill-fated hostage rescue in Iran.

about the issue 'almost solely from the perspective of the majority' (Ibid.). This situation could lead to premature movement to consensus, poor results and groupthink.

When the members of a group have diverse backgrounds or personality profiles (to name only two of the myriad other variables of diversity), there is a serious possibility that the members of the group will build sub-groups to support their views or that isolated members will have different opinions to the rest of the group. *Dissent* can be very constructive and it could 'stimulate more complex thinking, better problem solving and more creativity' (Nemeth 1986: 23-32). It could also stimulate original thought, solutions or judgments (DeDreu and DeVries 1996: 77-90; Martin and Noyes 1996: 91-113).¹⁸

Diversity comes not without risks. It can lead to intergroup conflict in various cases. Research has shown that the lack of understanding of expectations, intentions and points of view between members in combination with differences of opinion, can create conflict (Milliken, Bartel and Kurtzberg in Paulus and Nijstad 2003: 41). Conflict arises:

- when members have incompatible interests (Jehn 1995) or
- 'when one or more members of a group are perceived as interfering with the ability of others to attain their goals' (Katz and Kahn 1978).

Detectable differences in a group 'may also impact the degree of safety that members feel within the group context' (Milliken, Bartel and Kurtzberg in Paulus and Nijstad 2003: 41). Team psychological safety is defined by

¹⁸ One has to point out here that diversity is not identical to dissent. For example demographic diversity (e.g. ethnicity, gender, race) 'does not necessarily imply a difference in perspective that is applicable to the task at hand. One has only to look at Cabinet-level appointments to see that one can have varieties in gender and race but still achieve homogeneity of perspective.' (Nemeth & Nemeth-Brown in Paulus & Nijstad 2003: 75)

Edmonson (1999: 354) 'as a shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking'. A well-functioning group should be characterized 'by interpersonal trust and mutual respect in which people are comfortable being themselves' (Edmonson 1999: 354).

The process of group members deciding on the form of an open form piece's version, cannot be referred to as *brainstorming*,¹⁹ as it does not represent an attempt of generation of new ideas on a given topic. Nevertheless, group members have to find collectively ways to combine the material given and maybe to structure the 'narrative' of their performance. This process can lead to a group dysfunction observed in brainstorming sessions and called 'production blocking' (Diehl and Ströbe 1987). Parks and Sanna (1999) wrote that group members 'cannot simultaneously attend to messages from others and generate ideas'. This problem was detected also in one of my own scores' performance within the scope of this research. I am going to demonstrate the case in the next chapter.

The majority of the performances of the compositions in the context of this research were made by planned groups, which were mostly formed by myself. I could not avoid that because I normally organise the performances of my pieces myself. This means that I have to find the performers too. For each performance I tried to formulate groups whose members, in my point of view, had the potential to collaborate creatively. Throughout this process I was aware of the importance of diversity in a group. Through the relations

¹⁹ Brainstorming' is a technique for idea generation, which was designed by Osborn (1957). Osborn wanted to increase creativity in organisations. He felt that 'one of the main blocks to organizational creativity was premature evaluation of ideas' (Paulus & Brown 2003). He wanted to discourage criticism and encourage creativity. For Osborn a brainstorming session 'consisted of a set of specific procedural rules (Parks & Sanna 1999): a) Each member should generate as many ideas as possible, b) there should be no criticism on the quality of an idea in this stage, c) A group member may expand an idea offered by another member and d) There should be no conclusion as to which idea is to be adopted. This should be done at a later time.

of the invited performers I was trying to create on the one hand a comfortable environment for the participants to act creatively based on familiarity, which increases the decision-making effectiveness (Sawyer 2007: 51). On the other hand I was trying to form groups inclusive of different backgrounds and views that would provide enough heterogeneity to avoid phenomena like groupthink. I will present more information on the formation of the groups in the next chapter.

2.3 Groupmind

The biggest part of the analysis of groups so far in this writing is focused on the individual person in a group. This approach is called by researchers *individual-level analysis* of groups. But there is another way to analyse groups: *group-level analysis* is based on the assumption that each person is

an element in a larger system, a group, organization, or society. And what he does is presumed to reflect the state of the larger system and the events occurring in it. (Steiner, 1974: 96)

Group-level researchers like Émile Durkheim (1966) asserted that groups are not mere collections of individuals in a fixed pattern of relationships with one another, but on the contrary, they are linked by a unifying *collective conscious* (Jahoda, 2007). This collective conscious is also called *groupmind* and is according to Forsyth (2010: 16)

a hypothetical unifying mental force linking group members together; the fusion of individual consciousness or mind into a transcendent consciousness.

Psychologists like Floyd Allport asserted that a group phenomenon like groupmind does not exist. Allport believed that 'the actions of all are nothing more than the sum of the actions of each taken separately' (1924: 5). According to Allport if one wants to understand how groups work then one has to study the psychology of the individual group members.

Even group-level researchers did not believe that groups literally have minds. *Groupmind* was used as a metaphor to suggest that

many psychological processes are determined, in part, by interactions with other people, and those interactions are in turn shaped by the mental activities and actions of each individual in the collective. (Forsyth 2010: 17)

When Durkheim used the term *esprit de group* (groupmind), he was suggesting that individuals and groups mutually influence one another.

The mentality of groups is not that of individuals (particuliers), precisely because it assumes a plurality of individual minds joined together. A collectivity has its own ways of thinking and feeling to which its members bend but which are different from those they would create if they were left to their own devices. (Durkheim, 1900/1973, pp. 16–17)

The inextricably intertwined relationships between individuals and groups and between groups and their environment was the basis for Kurt Lewin (1951) who introduced the principle of interactionism. This principle assumes that ‘the behavior of people in groups is determined by the interaction of the person and the environment’. He summarized his ideas in the formula $B = f(P, E)$. The letter B stands for ‘behaviour’ of group members claiming that is

a function (f) of the interaction of their personal characteristics (P) with environmental factors (E), which include features of the group, the group members, and the situation. (Forsyth 2010: 17-18)

Because of the interactions that are inherent in the way a group functions Lewin argued that a group is a *Gestalt*, in other words a system the properties of which cannot be understood by examining each part of it individually. According to Lewin:

The whole is not 'more' than the sum of its parts, but it has different properties. This statement should be: The whole is different from the sum of its parts. In other words, there does not exist a superiority of value of the whole. Both whole and parts are equally real [...] the whole has definitive properties of its own. (Lewin in Law 2006: 141)

A person could be individually creative influenced by the other people and the social environment (meaning that the person could be influenced by groups that s/he could be part of, even in an unconscious way) or s/he could become consciously part of a group and of a kind of creativity which is not an attribute of the individual but of the group (Sawyer 2003: 25). In the next part I am investigating some of the basic features of group creativity.

2.4 On group creativity

Beginning in the late 1980s, creativity researchers like Teresa Amabile (1983, 1996) and Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (1988, 1990, 1996) followed by Vera John-Steiner (2000), Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad (2003) and Keith Sawyer (2003, 2008) focused on ‘the social and contextual environments within creative work occurred’ (Sawyer 2003: 24). These theories focused on product creativity, in other words on creative domains in which products are created over time, ‘with unlimited opportunities for revision by the creator before the product is displayed’ (Sawyer 2003: 5). This kind of creativity can be found in artistic domains like sculpture, painting and music, as well as scientific domains, ‘where the products generated are theories, formulas, or published articles’ (Ibid.). On the other hand in improvisational creativity a researcher can direct his interest from the creative process of the person to the creative processes of the group. This presents a shift in creativity research, ‘from a focus on creative products to a focus on the creative processes’ (Ibid.) that eventually result in creative products. By the early 1990s researchers like Keith Sawyer (2003; 2007) began to focus on *group creativity*, meaning a creativity, which involves two or more people creating something together at the same time, and its characteristics.

Although Sawyer’s theories describe features of improvisational creativity (he focused on jazz ensembles and improvisational theatre) some of the conditions for the growth of group creativity can potentially be present also in preparation and performance of notated music genres, like open form compositions for groups. Three main conditions are:

- a) *Process* (Sawyer 2003: 5): the shift from the creative process of the person to the creative processes of the group and the importance of the process instead of the product. The shift from the person to the group could be detectable in the preparation of an open form piece,

when collective decisions are required. Also, if a composer of an open form work 'accepts' any results coming from serious work on his/her scores, if the main aim of his/her work is the autonomy and self-organisation of the group as well as the process of discussion between the performers, then the final result – the 'product' – could become secondary.

b) *Unpredictability* (Sawyer 2003: 6): group creativity 'ranges across a spectrum from relatively unpredictable to relatively predictable'. When the performers' actions are constrained 'by the conventions of a genre or a situation' (Ibid.), then predictable performances could be observed (Sawyer gives examples like the ritualized initial turns of a courtroom and the opening sequences at the beginning of a phone conversation). In improvisational genres, like the improvisational theatre or musical free improvisation that Sawyer surprisingly does not use as example instead of jazz improvisation, 'dialogues represent the extreme of unpredictable', which presents also a combinatorial complexity: 'A large number of next actions is possible, and each action can lead the performance to a different direction' (Sawyer 2003: 7). When a notated composition presents indeterminacy in form, pitch, dynamics, timbre or duration then the exact way this piece is going to be performed can also be unpredictable and players can take unpredictable decisions that can lead to different sonic or visual results.

c) *Collaborative Emergence* (Sawyer 2003: 12): in an improvisational ensemble, like in an improvisational theatre group or a free improvisation musical group, 'the direction the group will travel is difficult to predict in advance'. Because of the interaction and the interdependence between the members of the group an analyst cannot predict how a performance could develop even if s/he has 'unlimited advance knowledge about the skills, motivation, and

mental states' (Ibid.) of the individual group members. The same applies to the performance of a notated score, which uses form, pitch, dynamics, timbre or duration indeterminacy.

Structuring a version of an open form score composed by myself requires collective work prior to the performance. This decision moves the creative process from the individual to the group. The indeterminacy presented in the compositions can easily provoke unpredictable dialogues and sequences of actions. Finally, due to open form the directions a performing group will follow concerning the form of their version are unpredictable.

When group creativity flourishes and people start to work as a unit, it is possible that a collective state of mind is detectable. Researchers like Keith Sawyer dealt with this group state.

2.5 Group Flow

Basing his research on Csikszentmihalyi's *flow*²⁰ theory, Sawyer claimed that when improvisational groups are at the peak of their ability, a *collective state of mind* could be observed. He called this state *group flow*. When there is an open communicative channel among the performers and each performer is open and listening to the others, when each performer fully attends to what the others are doing, even as they are contributing to the performance themselves, then Sawyer claims that those groups are collectively in a flow state (Sawyer 2003: 44). The difference between Sawyer's and Csikszentmihalyi's theories is that Csikszentmihalyi 'intended flow to represent a state of consciousness within the individual performer, whereas group flow is 'an emergent property of the entire group as a collective unit' (Ibid. 167).

Sawyer based his research on jazz ensembles and improvisational theater groups. He claims that

jazz and improv theater are not designed to generate a product at the end of the performance. Rather, the process is the product; the on-stage interaction among the performers is the only outcome that the group is working toward. (Ibid. 73)²¹

²⁰ *Flow* for Csikszentmihalyi is 'the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sake of doing it' (Csikszentmihalyi 1990: 4)

²¹ This is only partially truth. A free jazz jamming could be recorded and sold. In this case there would be a product, even a saleable one. There are enough examples of secondary studio recordings, which because the artists who did it became famous, the distributors included them in CD series (famous examples are alternative tracks of some Miles Davies pieces).

Nevertheless in the same study Sawyer extends the notion of group flow to task-oriented groups too (Sawyer 2003: 176).

2.5.1 Group Flow in notated genres

To achieve this group creative state there are some conditions that have to be present. Although Sawyer (2003, 2007) uses examples of genres with no notated script (like jazz improvisation and improvised theatre as well as business work environments), I assert that most of these conditions could also be present in cases of group preparation and performance of notated genres like open form pieces.²² Sawyer presents the following basic conditions for the appearance of group flow:

- *The Group's Goal* (Sawyer 2007: 44-45): the group should have a goal that provides a focus. This focus should be clear enough so that members can tell when they are near to achieve their aim but it should also be open-ended enough for '*problem-finding creativity*²³ to emerge' (Ibid. 45). A notated piece in which the composer used form indeterminacy can provide this kind of open-ended goal to the performers. Especially in the case of collective preparation of the structure of such a score, problem-finding creativity could have a fertile ground to grow.

²² One has to point out here though, that in genres like jazz even if there is no script, there is a whole musical tradition behind the performance. There is an 'idiom' that could be more restrictive than any written open form score. It is bizarre that Sawyer uses jazz improvisation as a parallel to theatre improvisation, which is surely closer to free musical improvisation.

²³ With this term Sawyer means that group members have to "find" and define the problem as they're solving it' (Sawyer 2008: 45). If a composer uses form, pitch, dynamics, timbre or duration indeterminacy the interaction between the players will provide them with a non-stop 'problem' production, which they would have to solve during the preparation or performance of the piece.

- *Close or 'deep' Listening* (Sawyer 2007: 46): the members of a group are more likely to achieve a group state of mind when the players respond in unplanned ways to what they hear (and see). This situation can be observed in all kinds of improvisational groups (jazz, free improvisation, improvisational theatre groups) that use no written script. However, this could also be a situation in the preparation and performance of notated piece if the composer uses form, pitch, dynamics, timbre or duration indeterminacy. In this case performers could make improvisational decisions during the preparation and performance.

- *Complete Concentration* (Sawyer 2008: 47-48): Researchers (Amabile et al. 2002: 14-18) asserted that creativity is linked with low-pressure work environments. These researchers are investigating mainly business work environments. However, their ideas could be applicable also in an art environment if a concert of notated pieces is organized so that:
 - a) Performers have the freedom to decide on their rehearsal planning and their performance
 - b) They know in advance that the composer is going to accept any result that comes from serious work on the pieces
 - c) There is enough time for them to prepare their performance.

- *Being in control* (Sawyer 2007: 49): group flow in a business environment is more likely to appear when people are granted autonomy by senior management and are in control of their actions. This situation could have common characteristics with artistic group working. The 'senior management' in the case of the preparation and performance of a notated piece for a group could be for example the composer or a director. If the composer gives the responsibility of organising their performance to the players and does not try to influence or control in any way the result, then people can be in total control of their actions and their work environment (rehearsal organisation, etc.).

- *Blending Egos and equal participation* (Sawyer 2007: 49-50): Playing in a group means controlling your ego. To achieve group flow group members have to work on their ability to 'submerge their egos to the group mind, to balance their voices with deep listening' (Ibid. 50). To achieve a group state of mind all participants should play an equal role in the collective creation of their performance. If the composer of an open form composition requires collective work by the participants these conditions could be present also in the preparation and performance of an open form score.

Sawyer argues that group flow is blocked if anyone's skill is below that of the rest of the group. This is maybe true in a jazz performance, where although there is no written score, there is an idiom - a tradition that a performer has to be aware. If a participant is not adequately familiar with the governing rules of the idiom, then it could be that his/her relationship with the other participants could block the potential growth of group creativity and group flow. In the framework of performing open form compositions for groups that address to musicians, amateur musicians and non-musicians the different skills and knowledge of the participants constitute no hurdle for the performance, since there is no idiom, no 'style' that one has to follow to perform the piece successfully.

- *Familiarity* (Sawyer 2007: 50-51): group flow is more likely to happen 'when players know the performance styles of their teammates' (Ibid. 50). This could easily happen also in any notated genres of any style.
- *Moving it forward*: According to Sawyer (2003: 54): 'Group flow flourishes when people follow the first rule of improvisational acting: "Yes, and..." Listen closely to what's being said; accept it fully; and then extend and build on it'.

Here Sawyer describes a process happening during performance in a jazz group or an improvisational theatre group. If the preparation of an open

form composition's version requires collective work then the condition described by Sawyer can be present in such an endeavour too.

- *The potential for failure* (Sawyer 2007: 54): In jazz and improvisational theatre the performers can never know how 'successful' their performance will be. In the case of preparation and performance of an open form score, which is indeterminate with regard to its performance, the final product can be completely unpredictable for the composer. Also for the players the overall form is at first unknown because they have to construct it. The use of indeterminacy in all basic sound parameters and the interaction and interdependence between the performers, has as a result that even when the sequence of events is collectively decided, the exact sonic result cannot be exactly foreseen and performers never know how 'successful' their version will be.

Consequently, Sawyer argues that group flow can be observable in improvised group performances. However, all conditions described can potentially be present also in the context of preparing and performing notated genres like an open form composition, which is using indeterminacy in basic sound parameters. This indicates that group flow and open form can potentially be connected.

2.6 Summary

Groups are important for humans. Consciously or unconsciously we take part in different groups throughout life. Through our membership in groups we define and confirm our 'values and beliefs and take on or refine a social identity' (Forsyth 2010: 2). The social connection and the interactions between the members of a group as well as their interaction with the environment can determine the type of the group and some of its main dimensions. Furthermore, groups often have goals that one can observe and analyse.

Group members can be creative in an individual way influenced or not by the environment. However, creativity researchers like Sawyer (2003: 25) believe that 'creativity cannot always defined as a property of individuals; creativity can also be a property of groups'. Groups are, after all, not just plain aggregations of their members but 'unified social entities' (Forsyth 2016: 13). When this group creativity is happening and each performer fully attends to what the others are doing, researchers asserted that a collective state of mind or, as Keith Sawyer (2003: 44) called it, 'group flow' can be observable.

Analysing the conditions for the appearance of group flow in improvisational genres introduced by Sawyer, one could draw the conclusion that these conditions can also be present during preparation and performance of notated genres, for example musical compositions which present indeterminacy in their basic features like form, pitch, dynamics, durations and timbre. Such compositions can provide a goal (e.g. the structuring of a version) for the group, open-ended enough for problem-finding creativity to emerge. Because of the indeterminacy used, players can make improvisational decisions during the performances if they want. If groups are self-managing they will have to decide on their own on all possible issues concerning preparation and performance. It is then in their

hands to create a low-pressure environment. Furthermore, each player may have an equal role during the preparation of the group's collective creation and they can base their performance on constant communication and spontaneity during the actual execution. Finally, players can build their performance by accepting an idea of a co-player, extending it and build on it and they can also be fully aware of the potential for failure that performances of open form pieces with improvisational elements could have.

All these potential characteristics of preparation and performance of an open form piece for a group will be discussed in the next chapter, in which I present the open form verbal and graphic compositions I composed in the context of this research.

3. Compositions 2010-2016. Composing, preparing, performing.

3.1 Why open form, verbal and graphic notation

If a composer wants to create pieces which encourage collaboration, collective decision-making, the growth of group creativity and a *group state of mind*, then it would make sense for decisions concerning the structure of form to be taken collectively. Collaboration between members of a group can lead to group creativity and to a kind of collective consciousness.

In my case the decision to let the performers use the material provided to construct collectively their performance relies on social and political reasons. I am trying to make a statement of collaboration and collective responsibility between the performers of my scores. If a group decides to perform one of my open form pieces, it is not only responsible for collectively structuring its performance but it should also be responsible for all practical issues like planning of the rehearsals, finding the necessary time and places. The best-case scenario is when all these tasks are completed without any third person's intervention.

The idea for collective responsibility and decision-making emerged from my participation in 6daEXIt Improvisation Ensemble since 2007,²⁴ an ensemble I co-founded together with a small group of students during my teaching years in the Music Department of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki/Greece (2005-2009). The group, which is now an independent improvisation group, plays free improvisation as well as verbal or graphic

²⁴ For more information about 6daEXIt Improvisation Ensemble see: <https://6daexit.wordpress.com/>

scores. It has a non-hierarchical way of organisation; decisions are made practically only in a unanimous way. No single member of the group can take any decisions on the group's activities. My involvement with such improvisatory, self-organised and non-hierarchical practices was the trigger that re-shaped drastically my approach to compositional practice. This way of making music was also in harmony with my socio-political beliefs of autonomous self-organisation of one's life and activities.

I do not write 'political music' but I would like that the preparation and performance of my pieces become a small example of how people can act in the real world. I am trying to demonstrate that people can act creatively and with the desire to structure their own life and world in collaboration with other human beings without waiting help from any leadership. Although utopian as a view, without this kind of social and political thinking I could not go on writing music. This way of thinking is very close to Christian Wolff's view on the potential social engagement of music. This engagement has to do

with the relationships of people within groups, where power may or may not be a factor. The latter may involve things like reciprocity, cooperation and non-hierarchical arrangements, ideals that might be found in political systems like socialism and anarchism, in their "pure" forms, which are almost never actually realized, though occasional, informal instances might turn up. These are ideals I believe in, and they have affected how my music works and how it is best prepared and performed. In that way my music could be said to be usable for a social (and perhaps political) end, though only by analogy or metaphor, for example, by showing non-hierarchical relations within the musical material and its performers. (Wolff in Collins and Malina eds. 2015)

In other words, Wolff asserts that the way music is made, realised and presented, may have a social impact. A musical setting, which is structured in a non-hierarchical way, may constitute an example for such behaviours in real life. Utopian or not, one cannot rule out the case that the collective work of a group of people in structuring their performance could have an exemplary force on how these people will act on their everyday life. Wolff actually asserts that this kind of thinking is 'fairly cautious and not impractical' (Wolff 2015). Frederic Rzewski demonstrates a way of thinking on the social power of music which is similar to that of Wolff: 'Music probably cannot change the world. But it is a good idea to act as though it could' (Gronemeyer and Oehlschläger 2007: 30).

In the first chapter I argued that indeterminacy in form is independent of the use of indeterminacy in other basic parameters (pitch, tempo, rhythm, expression or means of performance), and consequently independent of the fixing of the piece's final sonic result as well as of the notation used. One can find open form pieces with conventional staff notation, or pieces with pre-determined overall form with conventional, verbal or graphic notation where indeterminacy occurs only on some of the basic sound parameters.

Verbal and graphic notations are not directly connected with open form but they are nevertheless in harmony with my thoughts on how music should be offered by a composer to a wide range of people who might realize it. I would like that my scores are technically accessible to anyone, no matter their background, skills and abilities.²⁵ My scores are also practically accessible online for everyone to download from my blog and various other websites. Finally, I try, through the use of relatively simple verbal instructions and graphics, to make it possible for all people (musicians,

²⁵ I have to point out here that verbal and graphic notation is not necessarily accessible to all people. A composer could create a verbal or graphic score, which could be too complicated for amateur musicians or non-musicians to play.

amateur musicians and non-musicians) to participate in this collaborative way of making music. This decision is, as Pauline Oliveros also asserts,

deeply political in that it challenges certain premises in the musical establishment, that it opens the way for people to participate who aren't musicians. (Smith and Smith, 1994: 209)

Verbal and graphic notation can become a tool to help people become aware of their ability to play music together with other people, even if they cannot read notes, even if they think they cannot play an instrument or sing. They can play a kind of music that would be different to popular or traditional music with which many people are familiar. They can explore sounds, and construct their own performances together with other people. They can also make music without the leadership of a conductor or any kind of leader. All these thoughts have deeply political roots and aims because as Christopher Small states

once people become aware that music is in themselves and not only in those who have been selected to become musicians, [...], who knows what else they might insist on reclaiming, and enjoying, of what has been taken from them? (Small cited in Stevens et al. 1985)

Using this kind of notation the composer could, as Rzewski asserts, put his art

at the service of the people and of popular movements, instead of dallying, as we [with 'we' Rzewski means the composers] have done for so long, in the servants' quarters of the ruling class. (Gronemeyer and Oehlschläger 2007: 238)

Like Rzewski, Oliveros and Wolff I am interested in socializing music. Each tries to achieve this in his/her own way.

'Composers', states Wolff (2015) 'are mostly interested in making a career and never mind any political questions'. Working as a composer under the social and political principles described above changes the whole perspective of one's work. The principle aim should not be 'making a career', trying to be performed by the 'best ensembles' or soloists, but mainly become useful for (at least your local) music society.

3.2 Open form verbal and graphic pieces for groups: on the search for group creativity and group flow

My compositional work focuses on music for groups because I believe in the importance of working in groups. I believe it is socially and musically important for people to work together by being part of a group. It is important to collaborate with others to achieve something, to propose an opinion, to negotiate, to disagree and to agree on a solution.

My work from 2010 to 2016 researches – through the requirement of collective decisions prior to the performance about a version of an open form piece – the potential growth of group creativity. This kind of creativity is not the attribute of an individual but of the group. To achieve this:

- The creative process has to move from the person to the group and the process should become more important than the product. (*Process*, Sawyer 2003: 5, see 2.4)
- The actions of the performers should be unpredictable and present a combinatorial complexity. (*Unpredictability*, Ibid: 6, see 2.4)
- The directions taken by the group should not be predictable. (*Collaborative Emergence*, Ibid: 12)

If a group is willing to follow the given performance instructions of my scores, then all three conditions can be present in the preparation and performance of my pieces. The creative process has moved from the individual to the group through my request for collective decisions on the structure of each version. The actions of the performing group can be unpredictable, due to the indeterminacy in basic sound parameters. Finally, the directions each group can go, concerning the structure of a version, cannot be predictable due to the open form.

The requirement for collective work during the preparation and performance of my verbal/graphic compositions encourages 'group promotive interdependence' (Deutsch 1949, see 2.1) meaning that the success and the well being of each individual in the group improve the chances for success and well being of the group as a whole. Collective work also creates a 'co-operative goal structure' (Benson 2000, see 2.1) meaning that the individual goals of members are 'visible and similar' (Forsyth 2010: 382). There is no place for hidden agendas or opposed goals.

Group creativity could result to the appearance of a collective state of mind, or as Keith Sawyer calls it: *group flow*. The basic conditions for the potential appearance of group flow, (see 2.5) are:

- the group goal is open-ended enough for problem-finding creativity to emerge.
- players listen to each other close and respond in an unplanned way to what they hear.
- people work in a low-pressure work environment.
- people are in control of their actions and environment.
- performers control their egos and put them in the service of the group.

- performers participate in an equal way in the collective creation.
- the group is considered as a safe place for all participants to act creatively.
- performers respect each other ideas and try to build on them.

Sawyer asserted that the conditions for the growth of group creativity and group flow are present in improvised ensembles, like jazz groups and improvised theatre groups. I asserted in part 2.5.1 of this writing that the same conditions could be present also in notated genres like open form pieces. In this chapter I will investigate the appearance of the group flow conditions during the preparation and performance of my open form verbal/graphic compositions. I will also present the way they were

composed, prepared (as well as the implications of the preparation) and performed by different groups in Greece, Austria and the UK.

During the six years of this research I gradually built performance instructions that had the aim to provide a framework in which I would like performers to work. I started using the idea of requiring collective work for the performance of my open form pieces in my verbal/graphic score *Drops for ensemble* (2008/09) and I used some of the instructions in the first composition I made in the context of this research, *Words of Nothing* (2010). During the six years of my PhD studies I evolved the instructions trying to cover the main parameters I would like to control (or not). Through the repetition of these instructions I was trying to show that the most important aspect of my work is the collectively made structure of each performance through collective work between people.

The performance instructions of each of the compositions in the context of this research begin with (almost) the same paragraph concerning the required collective work:

Performers are invited to make a group realization of the composition using this material. The order of actions should be decided collectively prior to the performance. The resultant realization should be the product of a conversation between the performers and it should by no means be decided by one single person. (Porfiriadis 2010)

More instructions are provided, outlining the desired performance framework:

- The actions may be combined in any manner (based on the performers' choice), so that an action can continue while another starts, more than one action can be performed simultaneously.
- An action can be repeated by the same person provided that one or more other actions are inserted between repetitions to avoid successive appearances of the same action.
- The duration of the performance of the piece is indeterminate but nevertheless a minimum duration is often provided.
- Players are encouraged to perform their chosen action(s) as naturally as possible. Extreme displays and theatrics should be avoided.
- Each version should be agreed on for the specific performance; it may not be rehearsed or played at an earlier performance. Through this requirement I invite people to think of their version depending on the context of each performance. The repetition of a version would focus the attention of the group towards the re-production of an object. I would like though that the focus of the group would be towards the process of producing the object.

The following analysis of the preparation and performance of the pieces is based on specific performances. Due to the uniqueness of each performance of such a piece my analysis is based heavily on the interviews I made with the performers, as well as the observation of rehearsals and performances. While making the interviews on one hand I needed some defined answers to defined questions and on the other hand I needed to explore the situation and wished to get information I could not predict. To achieve these aims the best solution were semi-structured interviews, which can result to defined answers to defined questions, 'while leaving time for further

development of those answers, and including more open-ended questions' (Walliman 2005: 285).

In some cases I also tried to collect information by observing rehearsals as a non-participant researcher. In these cases it is obvious that my presence influenced the participants in some way but nevertheless I tried to be 'invisible' by not answering any questions and by not providing any feedback on the work observed.

3.3 Compositions 2010-2016: Composition – Preparation – Performance

The main aim of the compositions was to cultivate group creativity and collective consciousness in a group. Each piece however had also other more 'musical' aims that will also be analysed in this section of the commentary.

3.3.1 *Words of Nothing* for piano players (2010) and *Aria* for voice(s) (2010/11)

a. *Words of Nothing* (2010)

Words of Nothing is an open-form verbal score for at least two piano players, composed in 2010.²⁶ The aim of this piece was to compose actions that explore the theme of a piano, at least two performers, and the emotional and physical space between them. Performers should follow the basic instructions concerning collective work presented in 3.2. *Words of Nothing* can be also performed simultaneously with my verbal/graphic score *Aria* for voice(s) (2010/11). In this case both pieces can be played as solo pieces but the instructions for collective work prior to the performance remain the same.

The 20 actions of the score focus on non-observable psychological states and observable (but not necessarily comprehensible by the audience) performance processes. The actions are non-tautological in principle. In

²⁶ The score was initially composed as a solo piece and was performed by Danae Stefanou in its wholeness (14/11/2010, KNOT Gallery Athens. <http://knotarts.blogspot.gr/2010/11/liveknot-1411.html>). After this performance the piece was revised and at least two performers were required for its performance. I found that the solo realization of the score did not interest me because of the lack of collaboration between players.

other words, what the score says is not identifiable in what the performer is seen to be doing. There is very little chance a spectator would be able to ‘guess’ what the score describes by observing the action executed. There are even extreme instances of this notion, where the instructions are not at all prescriptive of an action, but at best descriptive of an unspecified set of conditions (Fig. 2):

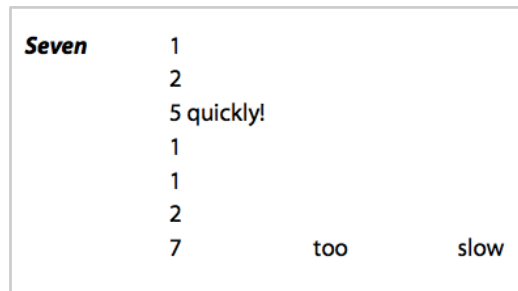


Fig. 2: *Seven* from *Words of Nothing* (2010)

Some of the actions are relatively visible. Even in these cases, there is no ‘justification’ for them. There are obvious actions that are nevertheless ‘covered’ by the physical limitations of the piano as an instrument and the relative distance of the audience from it. An example of this kind of action is *Strings* (Fig. 3):

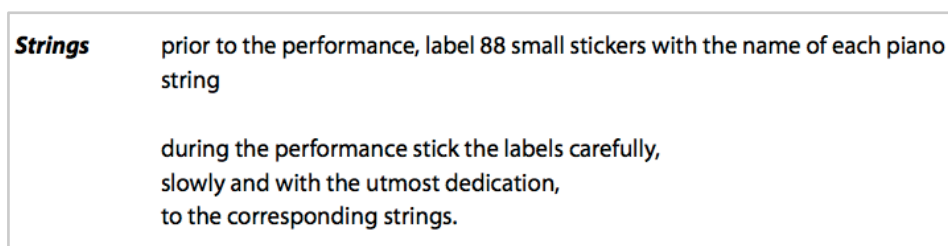


Fig. 3: *Strings* from *Words of Nothing* (2010)

The instructions also lead to interactions between the performers and the piano that have a subtly or blatantly anthropomorphic representation of the instrument, like the following (Fig. 4):

Face	close your eyes and think that a small part of the piano interior is the face of a loved one stroke it once with the tenderness it deserves (continuously pressing on the right pedal until the sound disappears)
-------------	--

Fig. 4: *Face* from *Words of Nothing* (2010)

The majority of the actions (18 out of 20) are written in the *imperative mood*.²⁷ Some 'may regard the use of this mood as too assertive, perhaps even dictatorial' (Lely and Saunders 2012: 32). However, I mostly tried to invite the performer to enter mental and practical situations that s/he will control (Fig. 4). Danae Stefanou, my co-player in the performance of *Words of Nothing* in KNOT Gallery Athens (2011) wrote: 'The authorial voice here resembles a kind of inconspicuous voice in one's head which often sounds more like a personal coach or a film director' (Porfiriadis and Stefanou 2011).

Some instructions focus on micro-actions that normally go unnoticed as parts of longer, entirely automated action sequences such as the basic motion of setting one's hands on the keyboard or depressing and lifting a key (Fig. 5):

Slow	depress the key as slowly as possible hold it let it come back up as slowly as possible withdraw your hand perform the same procedure with two, then with three, four and five fingers (-keys).
-------------	---

Fig. 5: *Slow* from *Words of Nothing* (2010)

²⁷ 'The imperative mood is commonly used to give commands' (Lely & Saunders 2012: 28)

In addition to such micro-actions the score includes emotion-based moments where performers are asked for example to let their life flash by them and focus on one 'scene' before playing or to gather up all the rage that has been piling up inside them and to externalize it only if they are capable of truly experiencing this kind of rage during the action. Finally, some instructions call for disciplined attentiveness to small or normally unimportant phenomena, for instance, in *Flashlight* the performer must illuminate the piano with a flashlight or, in *Touch*, he must touch all of the piano strings, one by one, with the utmost dedication.

Words of Nothing is a composition in which a central role is reserved for a grand piano. Performers have to communicate with this fascinating instrument and its physical properties. The usage of the piano as a medium for performing sonic ideas is being substituted by the treatment of the piano as an eventful space of its own right. This huge black mass becomes a totem, that inevitably dominates the space, and the performers have to deal with their feelings and their relationship with it and with each other. The instrument becomes something more than just a sonic source and the instructions address to performers 'as fully-fledged individuals, not as pairs of trained hands, eyes and ears' (Ibid.).

b. *Aria*

The aim of *Aria* was to create a score to be performed by a performer/performers that make use of voice/voices as well as their bodies in regards to space. The performer(s) use as a tool a number of verbal and graphic notations to design their own performance. The graphic part of the work consists of 10 pages of collages, with letters and words from UK newspapers as well as quotes from texts by André Breton (*Manifesto of Surrealism*, *Mad Love*, *Nadja*, *Introduction to the Discourse on the Paucity of Reality*) Jacques

Vache, Hugo Ball ('Kandisky', *Dada Manifesto*) and Tristan Tzara (*Dada Manifesto on Free Love and Bitter Love*).



Fig. 6: Preparing the material for the graphic part of *Aria* (2010/11)

If a performer decides to use the graphic scores in *Aria*, s/he should make use of the following 'mood' list for every action they perform. Every action resulting from the graphic scores has to appear in a different character (mood).

MOODS:

with joy	with anger	dry
with doubt	with terror	confused
with rage	triumphal	cynical
with embarrassment	sweet	determined
with certainty	sad	erotic
with indifference	ironic	furious
with charm	orgasmic	disturbed

The moods can be performed in one of the following modes: 'normal' (casual speaking), 'whispering', 'nasal' and 'as fast as you can'. The graphic pages of

Aria are an open field of opportunities for performance. The ways of performing the pages are endless.

Fig. 7: Graphic page from *Aria* (2010/11)

- Bodily awareness (*fingers, caress, sing your breath, feel, sing 2, shall I sing?, throat*) (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8: *feel* from *Aria* (2010/11)

- Spatial awareness (*I won't, syllables*) (Fig. 9).

syllables
7 spots in the space
7 short syllables

Fig. 9: *syllables* from *Aria* (2010/11)

- Interaction with the audience (*I won't, Silence, friend, hand, contact, energy, new melody*) (Fig. 10).

hand
Pick a member of the audience
you are not personally acquainted with
Go near them and calmly take their hand

Place it on your diaphragm and sing 5 different tones in *pp*,
using up all of your air each time.

Pause briefly between the tones

Fig. 10: *hand* from *Aria* (2010/11)

- Voice exploration (*sing 2, inaudible high*) (Fig. 11).

sing 2
Let all the air out

Sing what you want to sing while you are inhaling

Repeat 10 times

Fig. 11: *sing 2* from *Aria* (2010/11)

c. Performances

Words of Nothing was performed in 2011 by Danae Stefanou and myself. This is the only case I had to be involved with the performance of a piece in the context of this research, simply because I did not find another person to take part at the time. This compromises any discussion of the process of realising the piece, because my participation complicated things in this case. However, there were two more performances²⁸ where Andreas Papapetrou and Sapfo Pantzaki performed *Words of Nothing* and *Aria* simultaneously in 2012. Andreas is a composer/pianist and Sapfo is a musicologist who performs contemporary music using her voice. They are both former members of 6daEXIt Improvisation Ensemble and good friends of mine.



Fig. 12: S. Pantzaki and A.Papapetrou performing *Aria* (2011) and *Words of Nothing* (2010) at Coventry, 2012

For Andreas the collaboration between him and Sapfo required many different levels of communication. Andreas describes the situation of preparing the piece:

²⁸ 21/10/2012, INTIME Symposium University of Coventry/UK, Ellen Terry Building 18/05/2012, Trinity College of Music, Theatre Studio, Greenwich/London/UK, 'New Music for Voice and Piano'

When we decided to combine *Words of Nothing* and *Aria* together, after reading 'between the lines', we had to agree on which parts of them would be better in combination. We had to figure out how to merge the pieces into a single performance or allow them to be two simultaneous ones. (Pantzaki, Papapetrou and Porfiriadis 2012)

There was a lot of discussion between Andreas and Sapfo during the preparation for performance which was generated by the scores. Andreas commented on the situation:

We both felt that this was a crucial part of the creative process required in the making of the performance and we must admit that we have spent more time discussing the work than trying out the practicalities and actually rehearsing it. (Ibid.)

The questions concerning the structure could be answered in many alternative ways. If the performers interpret the instructions of the score rather liberally as Andreas and Sapfo did while preparing their performance in Trinity College of Music in 2012, then they could even agree not to share their decisions on the order of the actions they are going to perform with each other. Andreas recounts:

The key-word in the last sentence was 'agreed', as Alexis instructs his performers in the score to do. I feel that he might have some objections to this kind of interpretation. However, since he chooses to be physically absent and to allow this amount of freedom to the performers, he inevitably must accept whatever they decide to do in order to realise the work. Anyway, in our case, he is never truly absent during rehearsal because we know him well enough to be tempted into shaping the performance in ways we think would suit his personal artistic preferences, as well as ours. And this is one of

the rather complicated consequences that cannot be avoided when working with friends. (Ibid.)

Andreas is right. I did not have this interpretation in mind and it is not the way I would work to prepare for a performance. But even the decision by Andreas and Sapfo to try two different programs of actions in one of the occasions, was not a result of 'production blocking' (Diehl and Ströbe 1987, see 2.2) or laziness but rather an investigation of possible solutions to build their version of the score. And this is something I have to respect even if I disagree with this view.

Andreas and Sapfo organized the concert in London themselves, meaning that they were in total control of their endeavour, controlling absolutely their work environment. Equal participation, blending egos, respecting the ideas of the fellow player and familiarity were easily detected, because the performers are good friends and work together in many different frameworks. All these are important factors for the potential appearance of group flow and one can assert that they were present during the preparation and performance of *Words of Nothing* and *Aria* by Andreas and Sapfo.

3.3.2 *Spotting Nowhere* for four people using string instruments (2010)

This verbal/graphic composition aimed to provide instructions which could be played by any string instruments available, would be (depending on what actions the performers would choose) interesting also visually and would play in a humorous way with the history of 'string quartet' composition. The main performance instructions concerning collective work remain the same.

In this composition one can find three different types of scoring: 10 pages labeled *Graphic*, where different kinds of arrows, circles, letters, drawings can be interpreted freely by the players; 19 pages labeled *Score*, where I used mostly standard musical symbols, whose ways of performance I have explained in the instructions part; and 36 different verbal instructions for various actions.²⁹ I divided each one of the *graphic* and *score* pages of the composition in four different sections. Doing this, and in combination with the presence of different arrows, I invited the players to think of the spatial parameters of the composition.

The verbal part of the composition includes:

- Instructions for actions, which objectify the bow or the instrument. For example, in *Bow* the performer applies some resin on the bow with slow and calm movements and in *Hug* players should hold their instrument in their arms, close their eyes and become one with it.
- Instructions for actions where self-awareness of one's own body is a critical tool for performance (Fig. 13).

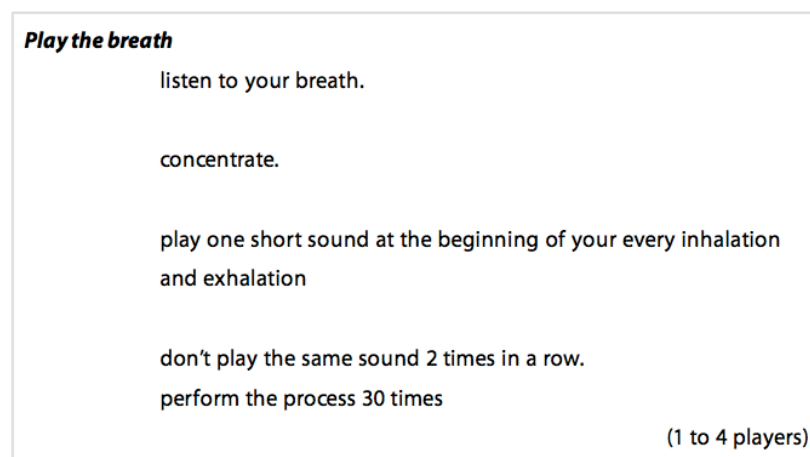


Fig. 13: *Play the breath* from *Spotting Nowhere* (2010)

²⁹ All verbal or graphic instructions, even the part where I use music symbols, could be played by an amateur musician on any string instrument.

- Instructions for actions which investigate the physical, psychological and musical connection between the individual performer and his/her fellow-players (Fig. 14).

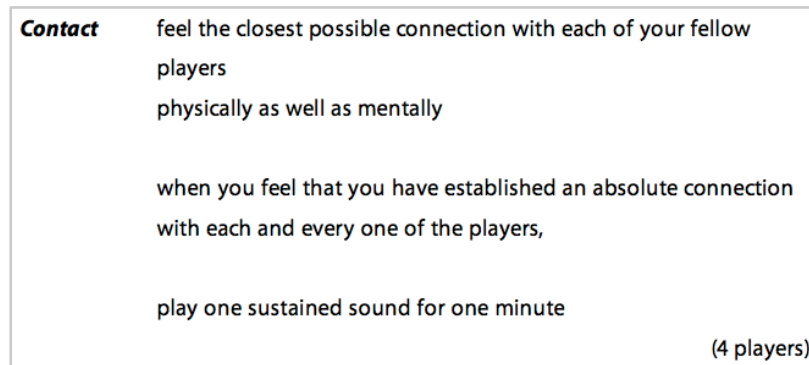


Fig. 14: *Contact* from *Spotting Nowhere* (2010)

- Instructions that can lead to humorous situations, mostly in moments where they suggest a 'classical' string instrument and maybe a trained musician. In *High* and *Col legno* the performer has to play a page from a string quartet composed in the classical or romantic period either two octaves higher than written or only *col legno*. This will definitely change the music in an awkward way. Furthermore, s/he has to play isolated from his/her co-players, which is a fairly strange situation for a 'string quartet'.
- Instructions for actions that invite performers to explore their relationship with the actual performance space (Fig. 15).

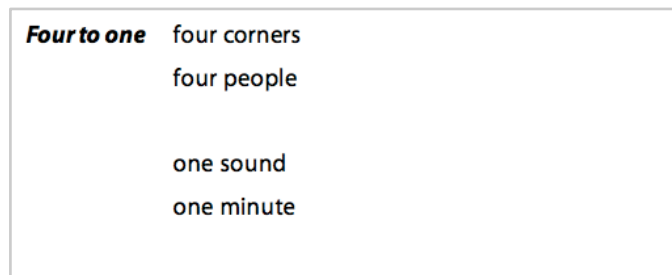


Fig. 15: *Four to one* from *Spotting Nowhere* (2010)

- Instructions for actions, which investigate how performers relate to the audience. In these kinds of actions performers are asked to connect with members of the audience in different ways. In *Melody*, for example, a member of the audience should whisper their favourite melody in the ear of a performer and then the performer should choose an inconspicuous point in performance space and perform the melody in a very low dynamic.
- Instructions for actions that explore the instrument as a 'total configuration' (Nyman 1999: 20) (Fig. 16).

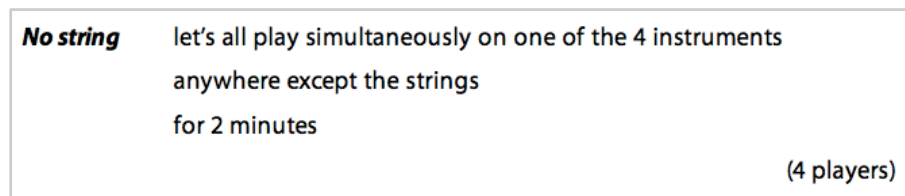


Fig. 16: *No string* from *Spotting Nowhere* (2010)

- Instructions for actions that can lead to or can be received as 'theatre'. These actions have no real 'justification'. In *Arco on me* the performer has to play *arco* on his body until the bow runs out of raisin. This could be perceived as a strange action from the audience but it could also lead to infinite other narratives, depending on the reception of the gestures and the contextual connotations by the audience.

The majority of the verbal instructions (32 out of 36) are written in the imperative mood. These have not the character of an 'inconspicuous voice in one's head' (Porfiriadis and Stefanou 2011) like in *Words of Nothing*. They have a more practical character and they are more straightforward. Four of them though have a more meditative character and begin with 'Let's...'.

Spotting Nowhere was premiered in KNOT Gallery Athens/Greece (2011) by an amateur musician and three undergraduate students of music.³⁰ Two of them were members of 6daEXIt Improvisation Ensemble and the other two were their acquaintances: members of our improvisation group were Georgia Koumara, a composer/pianist who played violin in the performance; Olga Papakonstantinou, a baroque singer who played guitar with bow; Theano Giannezi, a painter/amateur musician who played the violoncello; and the violinist Alexandra Karamoutsiou. Georgia, Olga and Alexandra were also students at the Music Department of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

The two members of 6daEXIt who took part in the premiere, Georgia and Olga, had played in 2010 *Drops for ensemble* (2008/09), my first open form verbal/graphic piece in which I required the collaboration of the players prior to performance to structure their version. Alexandra and Theano participated for the first time in such project. I chose Georgia and Olga from our group simply because they would like to play violin and guitar with bow respectively, although these were not their main instruments. Alexandra was not a member of 6daEXIt but she visited us a couple of times and played with us. She is, unlike Georgia and Olga who made a lot of experimentations in their membership in 6daEXIt, a violin player who had played mainly music from the classical/romantic period until then. Finally, Theano is a painter and amateur cello player. I thought that the choice of Alexandra and Theano in combination with the different music backgrounds of Georgia and Olga, would make the group diverse enough to avoid phenomena like *groupthink* (Janis 1982). Nevertheless, because of their involvement with 6daEXIt, their status as university students and the friendship relationships between some of the members, I thought that there will be enough familiarity between them and the group will provide psychological safety for all to act in a creative way.

³⁰ 04/06/2011, 'Wrong Place Right Time' - Concert with compositions by A.Porfiriadis, KNOT Gallery Athens/Greece

As a first step, performers chose individually the pages which each one of them would like to play. During their next three meetings they decided collectively which pages they wanted to perform as a group, they began structuring their version and rehearsing their material (Koumara 2011).



Fig. 17: G. Koumara, A. Karamoutsiou, T. Giannezi preparing their performance of *Spotting Nowhere* (2010), Thessaloniki, 2011

Players decided on the sequence of actions using different criteria. The first criterion was the use of the performance space. They chose actions depending on the moving around they wanted to do. Because of the movements from one point to other the second basic criterion for the final structure was the time given for each action. Finally, another basic criterion was the number of performers required. The group tried to have a variety of number of performers in sequence. Concerning the sound, the basic idea was to foster a sound continuity. The group tried to have 'different actions that one started before the other ended etc.' (Koumara 2011). A final criterion was that the group was cautious not to have two or three soundless actions in sequence.

The process followed indicates that group members found themselves the problems concerning the performance of their version and decided on collective solutions, listening closely each other's opinions. In other words,

the score provided a goal open enough for problem-finding creativity to grow. Also, because they were in control of their project they created a friendly and relaxed environment to work in.

The group decided not to make a full performance score (with the actions of the whole group in one place) but each player to have her own individually made performance score (Fig. 18). From the ten graphic pages, the 19 'score' pages and the 36 verbal instructed actions, they chose two graphic pages, six 'score' pages and nine verbal instructed actions. Total amount of actions/pages was 17.³¹ Because the majority (12 out of 17) of the actions they decided to play were actions for four persons, they had to know constantly what their co-performers played.

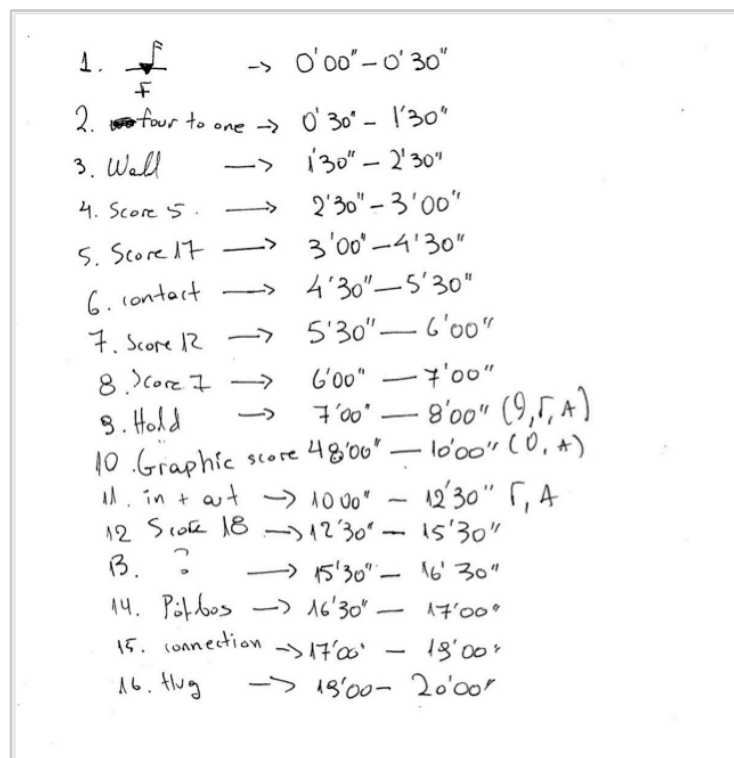


Fig. 18: Individual performance score for *Spotting Nowhere* (2010), made by A. Karamoutsiou, Thessaloniki, 2011

³¹ As one could observe Alexandra wrote in her score that there were 16 actions but this is not correct. She wrote that between 10.00 and 12.30 of the performance she played one action. Observing her score and the video of the performance though it is clear that she played between minutes 10.00 – 10.30 the verbal instruction *exhale* and between 10.30 – 12.30 the verbal instruction *in and out*.

During the preparation all members actively took part in the discussions about the structure. All members answered in their interviews that there was no leading person. They all asserted that it was a collective endeavour. Of course because of the different backgrounds and characters somebody talked more than others, had more ideas, etc. Olga said on the topic: 'I think there was no leading person during the preparation. We all talked more than others at some point' (Papakonstantinou 2011). There was a constant blending of egos and people offered their energy and ideas to the group.³²

I asked the participants to tell me how they found this way of organizing a performance and how they felt that I, as the composer, did not took part in any way during the preparation. Georgia and Theano was a bit stressed if I would like the result. Theano said:

I was a bit stressed because I felt so to say unassisted. I was thinking: why is he doing that? What if he does not like the result? This stressed me because I was expecting some guidance. [...] But on the other hand I liked it. (Giannezi 2011)

It looks like the players who worked in the group were a bit unsettled by the experience of working without knowing my view on what they did but they nevertheless had fun and found the process interesting. While preparing their version they listened carefully to each other and built on each other's ideas on the structure. They were in total control of their endeavour, creating a relaxed work environment and felt safe in the group to support their opinion or to express dissent. No important conflicts and no production blocking have been reported in the interviews and each group

³² The way the group worked shows that 'group promotive interdependence' (Deutsch 1949, see 2.1) and 'co-operative goal structure' (Benson 2000, see 2.1) were present. Also the group was unified by members' shared desire to accomplish their aims, meaning that *task cohesion* (Yukelson, Weinberg, & Jackson, 1984; Siebold, 2007 or see 2.1 of this writing).

member participated equally in the process. It looks like the whole procedure flowed without serious problems and the group succeeded to structure their version collectively. One could assert that all important conditions for the potential appearance of group flow were present also in this project.³³

3.3.3 *Air* for movement (2011)

The aim of *Air* was to observe movement as music, to hear movement itself. Working as a pianist in a professional dance school in Athens, I was fascinated by the sounds of the bodies moving in space and falling to the ground and by the sounds of breathing, especially when dancers had to perform difficult tasks. I was also mesmerised by the visual power of a slowly moving body. I found the opportunity given by verbal notation to work with movement as a composer a very provoking idea.

The instructions for collective work are the same as in the aforementioned compositions. *Air* consists of 40 verbally instructed parts. The majority of the actions are non-tautological, meaning that the instructions are not necessarily identifiable in what the performer is seen to be doing.

The verbally instructed actions of the score included:

- Actions that use the memories of the performer as their basic material. For example in *Professor* the player has to close his/her eyes and think about a dance professor who had annoyed him/her and then open their eyes and dance for two minutes in a way that the professor would hate.

³³ See Sawyer 2007: 57 or 2.1.5 part of this writing.

- Actions which performer has to execute in a 'parallel universe', in a mentally 'isolated' way (Fig. 19).

Closed eyes closed eyes

thinking of a person very dear to me

dancing with him/her for 2 minutes
with my eyes closed

Fig. 19: *Closed Eyes* from *Air* (2011)

- Actions the performance of which requires the self-awareness of one's own body in space. Such actions are connected with the pulses of the heart or with the function of breathing (Fig. 20).

Breathing 2 my every first move is an inhalation
my every second move is an exhalation

no move without a breath of its own

for 2 to 3 minutes

Fig. 20: *Breathing 2* from *Air* (2011)

- Actions that invite the performer to move or feel the environment with his/her naked body. I compose those because I felt that in a piece for 'movement' the performer would have to deal also with the presence of his/her uncovered body in the space (Fig. 21).

Unprotected	all the lights go out
	I dance naked, very intensely, very close to the audience for 1 minute
	I stop
	I get dressed without rushing
	the lights are turn on again

Fig. 21: *Unprotected* from *Air* (2011)

- Instructions for actions, which invite the performer to relate to some member of the audience (Fig. 22).

Audience 2	touching an audience member that I do not know dancing with them for 1 minute without losing contact
-------------------	---

Fig. 22: *Audience 2* from *Air* (2011)

- Instructions that lead to a kind of endurance art in connection (or not) with members of the audience, as well as actions that could not be literary performed because it would cost injuries for the performer but have nevertheless characteristics of endurance art (Fig. 23 and 24).

Item	approaching an audience member that I do not know I try to move them, with their seat to another point in the space
	I do not rush
	I try until I cannot go on any longer

Fig. 23: *Item* from *Air* (2011)

Wall	gathering up speed
	running with all my strength and crush myself on the wall
	going back to my starting point
	I repeat
	again
	again
	again

Fig. 24: *Wall* from *Air* (2011)

All the verbal instructions in this piece were written in the first person. This is the only verbal composition in the context of this research that I used this technique. Although it is not really common for a verbal score to have instructions in the first person I wanted these instructions to have the character of an ‘internal conversation’ for the performer. By this my aim was to encourage concentration and discipline.

To perform *Air* one does not have to be a dancer. There are enough actions for people that have nothing to do with contemporary dance. Nevertheless, the two performers of the premiere were dancers. *Air* was premiered in *Music in Motion Festival*³⁴ in Athens by the dancers Vitoria Kotsalou and Vasiliki Chrysanthakopoulou. The same dancers performed the piece in Syros during the *Akropoditi Dance Festival* 2015.³⁵ In this case I did not choose the performers myself. The dancers chose the piece in the framework of the festival. The collaboration between Vitoria and Vasiliki

³⁴ 30/05/2015, Music In Motion Festival Athens, Theatre Trianon, Athens/Greece

³⁵ 15/07/2015, Akropoditi Dance Festival 2015, Akropoditi Dance Center, Syros/Greece

had dramatically different characteristics than any other group which worked on my open form pieces in the framework of this research.

The months during the preparation of the performance, Vasiliki lived together with her husband (Vitorias' brother) and their son in Vitorias' apartment, where Vitoria lives with her daughter. They initially read the score together. Then they tried to make a rehearsal program but that was complicated due to the two children, work, and a crowded apartment. Vitoria recounts:

So we decided to soothe the process and to stop thinking the preparation of the piece as something separated from our daily lives. On the contrary we decided to make it part of our daily activities. With that I mean that when we, for example, sat on the table to eat, we also worked a bit. In other words, it was an active process in our life. (Kotsalou 2016)

Vitoria and Vasiliki agreed that they wanted to work on this piece *as a practice*.

We did not want just to *produce*, to focus on the piece to be produced. On the contrary we wanted to focus on the practice required. We believed that in order to communicate the sound of our movement we had to be in the mode of practice and not of performance. (Ibid.)

Working with the material in an abstract way in order just to produce a piece for the performance would be according to Vitoria

a practice harmonised with a production line character of working. This way of working, this attitude leads us to nowhere. There is no meaning for me to do that and I am not interested in that anymore.

I was not interested to do a 'good performance' with Vasiliki. On the contrary the fact that we kneaded together, we trust one each other, we searched what it means 'hearing the movement' for us, was very interesting and it helped me in my real life. (Ibid.)

The concerns of the two dancers show that the score provides a goal open enough for problem creativity to grow. Performers found collectively the way they wanted to work with the material and build their version of the piece. They also created for themselves a way of working that did not exercise pressure on them.

As a first step they tried out *all* the actions of the score to find actions that presented a challenge for their bodies or their relationship. Through this process a material was born. Vitoria and Vasiliki felt that this material was *alive*. It was not anymore an abstract instruction of the score, which invited them to perform it.

Through the repetition of this material we began to reposition or remove actions and to realise the sensation/the 'sound' that each action produced. The repetition of this material became a kind of ritual. In other words our performance obtained its sequence of actions through the repetition of the material. (Kotsalou 2016)

The dancers focused on the effort to hear the movement. Vitoria commented: 'For us the whole project was music. We thought that we hear the choreography like we hear music' (Kostalou 2016). They 'tasted the material' (Ibid.), 'heard' it and understood it through testing it. Taking in consideration the time limitation provided by the festival³⁶, the fact that

³⁶ The festival required that the pieces have a duration up to 15 minutes.

their version had to be in a closed form and that they had to perform in a theatre space,³⁷ they took their final decisions.

When they decided on the final structure, both Vitoria and Vasiliki used a sheet of paper to draw their movements for the entire performance. (Fig. 25 and 26)



Fig. 25,26: Performance scores for *Air* (2011) made by V.Kotsalou and Vasiliki Chrysanthakopoulou

Thus, during this process performers worked in constant communication, they closely listened to each other's opinions and took through their practice rational and spontaneous decisions concerning the structure of their version.

³⁷ During the performance of *Air* in theatre Trianon, we asked the audience to come on stage and to surround Vitoria and Vasiliki.

Both performers were aware of the possible hurdles and surmounted possible difficulties during the preparation through practice. Vitoria described:

Our differences were based on our different body types and the difficulties that each body could have when trying to achieve a specific type of movement. What we did to surmount this problem was that one of us made an action and the other observed. So we could make some critic. (Kotsalou 2016)

The two performers in this case were good friends and they even lived in the same apartment. This fact could lead to tensions between the performers and they had to create working conditions that guaranteed a personal space for thought and action. According to Vitoria:

We did not talk on personal issues irrelevant to our work during or direct after our rehearsing. Often we did not go together to the space we rented for rehearsing. We did that to provide a space for both of us and to feel that we now entering a framework of preparing our performance. (Kotsalou 2016)

Examining the final structure made by Vasiliki and Vitoria one can observe that only three out of the 13 actions used where individual.

Think	Think
Fingers	Fingers
Breathing 1	Breathing 1
Tips	Tips
Wall 1	Wall 1
57 times	57 times

Mirror	Fall
Run	Run
10 Seconds	Touch
Fetus	Arms
Air 5	Air 5
Ballerina	Ballerina
Song	Song
[Vasiliki]	[Vitoria]

The majority was common actions because as Vitoria said their main concern

was to hear. We could not do that if we would do different actions all the time. To start and stop an action together helped us to hear our movement.³⁸ (Kotsalou 2016)

Vitoria and Vasiliki were in total control of their project and they blended their egos in a successful way. They also enjoyed the autonomy offered by the fact that I as composer do not interfere in any way in the preparation and performance of the pieces. Vasiliki stated that she felt that she had ‘a lot of room to act and that was very pleasant’ (Chrysanthakopoulou 2016).

I think in this way there was space to develop the piece through the relationship between Vitoria and me. I was often confronted with myself but that was very creative. We were invited to maintain the balance between our relationship and the collaboration and I think this worked really well. (Chrysanthakopoulou 2016)

³⁸ Vitoria used the verb ‘hear’ not only literally but also metaphorically, meaning to understand and feel all the qualities a movement could have.

Furthermore the two performers participated equally in the preparation according to the interviews. After all, the way they decided to work, through practice, required that both would be energetically present in the preparation.³⁹

In conclusion, Vitoria and Vasiliki worked in an experiential way, testing, trying, searching and moulding the whole material, until they reached their aim. They tried to find out through practice which part of this material they really needed to build their final structure. They did this because they believed that ‘things are born when there is a need for them. If there is no need then you cannot find beauty’ (Kotsalou 2016). I found this way of working a wonderful attempt to avoid rationalism in the structure of one’s version. It focuses on the process and I found this idea very useful both artistically and socially.

The verbal score provided a goal open enough for performers to act creatively while preparing and performing it. Performers worked closely, in an equal way, being in control of their endeavour and work environment. They blended their egos to move forward their collaboration being aware of the possible implications of working with such a material through practice. Working collectively they succeeded to build their version as a group. One could say that the way Vitoria and Vasiliki worked enabled the appearance of all necessary conditions⁴⁰ for group flow to grow.

³⁹ ‘Group promotive interdependence’ (Deutsch 1949, see 2.1) and ‘co-operative goal structure’ (Benson 2000, see 2.1) were also here present.

⁴⁰ See 2.1.5 of this writing

3.3.4 *Complicity* for voice(s), wind instrument, string instrument, piano and percussion/ object player(s) (2011)

Complicity was an endeavour to compose an open form piece for 'voice and ensemble' using verbal/graphic notation. The idea was to break the eminence of the voice (especially if the execution would have one voice performer). I did that by requiring that the group as a whole must decide what actions will each member of the group should do.

Complicity consists of 14 graphic pages for vocalist(s) and 14 pages with verbal instructions for instrumentalists. The vocalist's part makes use of a poem by Leonard Peltier⁴¹. The ensemble chooses collectively the number and sequence of pages or actions to be performed by the voice(s) and the instrumentalists. Each page in *Complicity* has duration of one minute. Each action can either last one whole minute or can be performed at any point within this one-minute timeframe assigned to each individual page. The instrumentalists can also perform more than one action during the one minute but they should play each action only once. *Complicity* was my first verbal/graphic score where a division of the material across players is predetermined: the graphic part is to be used by the vocalist and the verbal by the instrumentalists.

⁴¹ Leonard Peltier is an 'imprisoned Native American considered by Amnesty International, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National Congress of American Indians, the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights, the Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Rev. Jesse Jackson, among many others, to be a political prisoner who should be immediately released.' (<http://www.freeleonard.org/case/>). The piece took its title from the title of the poem 'Complicity' found in Leonard Peltier's webpage (<http://www.freepeltiernow.org/peltier.html>).

Pages 1 to 10 should all be performed. Pages 11-14 can be performed if the players decide to do so. This means that the minimum duration of the work will be 10 minutes and the maximum 14 minutes. There is also the opportunity for performers to use *cues*, which were associated with the decisions made by the vocalist(s). This was introduced by actions that began with *if*. In case that an instrumentalist decided to perform the *if* actions found on pages 7, 8 or 10, then the vocalist would only decide upon the manner of realization for his/her corresponding pages ad hoc during each rehearsal and performance. The instrumentalist should then react to the action chosen by the vocalist in the prescribed way. There is an instruction that it is preferable for the vocalist to alternate between different decisions during each rehearsal and leave the decision for the final performance open, therefore ensuring that real-time decisions and unpredictable choices will be made by instrumentalists during the performance (Fig. 27).

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. If you hear a muted sound from the voice, walk to a member of the audience and play a very soft noise in their ear.6. If you hear a muted sound from the voice, feel it and respond spontaneously to that.7. If you see the vocalist talking into the ear of an audience member, play a loud muted sound. |
|--|

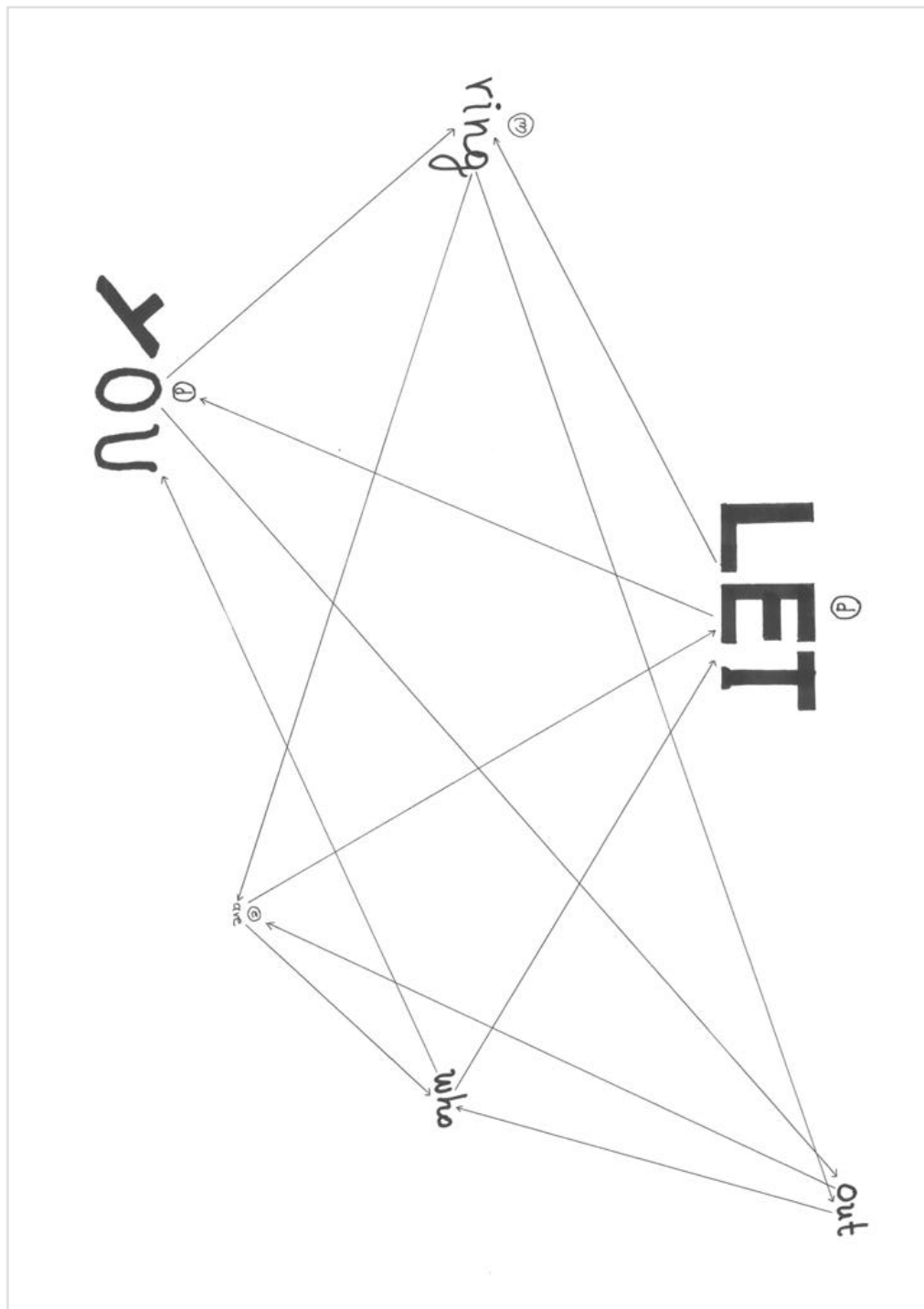
Fig. 27: *Complicity 7* (2011) – Instruments

The vocal part of the work is presented in a graphic way with the hope to elicit creative results from the vocalist(s). According to the performance instructions, the vocalist(s) should not sing (with the exception of the word *you* on page nine). It is desirable that the closest style to singing in *Complicity* will be a kind of *Sprechgesang*. Otherwise, the words are to be spoken, whispered or anything in between. The size of the letters could be read as an indication of dynamics.

The text is presented in ways that invite players to think of their performance in spatial as well as sonic terms. Text is presented in different parts of the A3 pages, and different kinds of arrows and geometrical forms

suggest movement in space. There are signs for performing practically in the ears of audience members, thus introducing a more intimate spatial connection between the vocalist and the audience. There are also signs for performing from a distance and signs for performing with mouth shut using one's hand (Fig. 28).

Fig. 28: *Complicity 7* (2011) - *Voice(s)*



The instrumentalists' part is verbal and it focuses mainly on the production of sounds. There are however actions that invite the player to physically explore the performance space (while playing or not), as well as soundless actions involving instruments, and parts without the use of instruments during performance (Fig. 29).

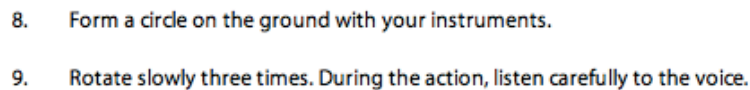
- 
8. Form a circle on the ground with your instruments.
 9. Rotate slowly three times. During the action, listen carefully to the voice.

Fig. 29: *Complicity 5* (2011) – Instruments

In the instrumental part I suggest actions that somehow musically 'shadow' the graphics of the vocalists' part. I wanted to *translate* into the instrumental part the movement of the arrows, the geometrical forms and sizes of the letters and words, the different spots that the text is presented on the pages and the one-line notation, (for example by reading small letter-fonts in the vocal part as an indication that the sounds should be very quiet and short). Instructions 1 and 2 of the instrumental parts are always the same across all 14 pages. The first instruction ('Listen to the voice for 10 sec. Respond to it spontaneously. Do not think much and do not cover the voice') may instigate freely improvised actions that differ greatly from the spectrum of actions I had in mind when composing the pages. The second instruction ('Do not perform. Just listen to the voice') could lead to a solo voice part. For this verbal part of the composition I used the imperative mood because I found that it was the most practical way to achieve the sound results I wanted.

The piece was performed in two different occasions: in KNOT Gallery Athens⁴² and in Bath Spa University⁴³. For the performance in KNOT Gallery

⁴² 05/05/2012, KNOT Gallery, 'Complicity'-Concert with compositions by A.Porfiriadis, Athens/Greece

I personally invited players to participate. I asked the 6daEXIt members Georgia Koumara, Olga Papakonstantinou, Antonis Rouvelas, to join Alexandra Karamoutsiou, the violinist who played in the premier of *Spotting Nowhere* together with Georgia and Olga. I added the flutist Penelope Papathanasiou in the group, who is a musician working mainly with music from the classical/romantic period and had at that point no experience with open form composition, indeterminacy or improvisation. I added Penelope to increase the diversity and dissent in the group and to avoid groupthink due to the close relationship of the three members of 6daEXIt. Knowing how the members of 6daEXIt used to work I thought that the group would present a safe place for all members to act creatively and express themselves freely.

The group spent the first two rehearsals just to discuss on the actions written in the score. They read all the actions, discussed them, they wrote practical questions that could arise and they chose actions (without using their instruments) that all members of the group liked.

During the second rehearsal we began making a general plan by discussing and testing actions we already chosen. We excluded some actions from the very beginning for various reasons. These decisions were made from the majority but there were no real debates. (Papathanasiou 2012)

The group made two more rehearsals. During these two rehearsals and through conversations on the material chosen the group outlined the structure of their version of the piece.

The main criteria of choosing the actions were the performers' personal preferences and the interaction between the members of the group

⁴³ 16/05/2012, Bath Spa University, Material Ensemble, Bath/UK

(Karamoutsiou 2012). Thus, performers were in constant communication and listened closely each to other's opinions while building their version of the piece and finding solutions to the discovered problems. Furthermore, performers organised a rehearsal environment that provided a relaxed way of working.

The group did not make a full performance score. Each of the players had their own individually made performance score. The one-minute duration of each page was a time-basis which allowed the performers to coordinate themselves easily with their co-performers. (Fig. 30)

The image shows a handwritten performance score on lined paper, divided into 12 one-minute sections. The instructions are written in Greek and English. The score includes musical notation such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'loud' and 'muted'. The sections are as follows:

- 0'-1'**: *εξάκις 10 ήχοις προς το σέτ μου* (6 times 10 sounds towards my set)
- 1'-2'**: *10" ακούω κι αυτοφωνία ανήκουν* (10" I hear and self-talk belongs)
- 2'-3'**: *— (solo vn)* (solo violin)
- 3'-4'**: *116 ήχοις ήχους (σπερματικά ήχοις)* (116 sounds sounds (seeds sounds))
- 4'-5'**: *σιωπή* (silence) and *Melody 2 woodblocks* (with a diagram showing a sequence of notes)
- 5'-6'**: *10" ακούω κι αυτοφωνία ανήκουν* (10" I hear and self-talk belongs) and *1 loud short / 4 app pitches, loud muted / 3 app pitches, loud muted / 4 app pitches* (with a diagram showing a sequence of notes)
- 6'-7'**: *0"-30" ηχητικό ερευνα στη γυναικα και ακούω* (0"-30" sound research on the woman and I hear) and *υπερτίμω των ηχητικών (κίω στη γυναικα)* (hyper-timing of the sounds (key on the woman))
- 7'-8'**: *— (solo pn)* (solo piano)
- 8'-9'**: *επιτίμω* (hyper-timing) and *ευχάριστη κίνηση πάνω σε σπινάκι (50.921w)* (pleasant movement on a spinaki (50.921w))
- 9'-10'**: *10" ακούω και αυτοφωνία ανήκουν* (10" I hear and self-talk belongs) and *9 ήχοις/προς διαφορετικούς ήχους* (9 sounds/towards different sounds)
- 10'-11'**: *0"-50" υπερτίμωσες αναλύς ήχος σε ήρεμο περιβάλλον που διαφέρει από accents* (0"-50" hyper-timing of sound analysis in a calm environment that differs from accents) and *10" 4 ήχοις εντάως ήχους* (10" 4 sounds towards sounds)
- 11'-12'**: *Αν η όβρα δυναμεί loud muted sound* (If the work becomes loud muted sound) and *"SILENCE"* (with a diagram showing a sequence of notes)

Fig. 30: Individual performance score for *Complicity* (2011), made by A.Rouvelas, Thessaloniki, 2012

The collaboration between the members of the group went well according to the interviews. Members felt well in the group and were confident to express their opinion and thoughts (Papathanasiou 2012). Penelope, who did not know her co-players personally was well integrated and faced no real problems during the preparation and performance of *Complicity*. She recounted that: 'I did not feel, not for a moment, that I was an outsider. (Ibid.) Egos of the performers were successfully blended and all members took actively part in the creation of the version (Karamoutsiou 2012).⁴⁴

All members except Penelope had performed some other score made by me before this project. Consequently, they knew that I believe in the autonomy of the performance groups. Penelope called me several times to ask questions on various issues, which in their majority I did not answer. I urged her instead to look better in the score and take her own decisions in collaboration with her co-players. Although she was a bit stressed with some practical issues she found this situation 'extremely interesting' (Papathanasiou 2012).

Summarising, the endeavour of this group was a successful one. Group members communicated closely and equally during the preparation, blending their egos in a successful way and building on each other's ideas. The group was a safe place for all members to act creatively. They also presented more spontaneous communication during the performance. Group members were in complete control of their project and organised a low-pressure environment for their rehearsals. They also achieved to build their version of *Complicity* collectively. Consequently, the way *Complicity*

⁴⁴ The process as described in the interviews shows that 'group promotive interdependence' (Deutsch 1949, see 2.1) and a 'co-operative goal structure' (Benson 2000, see 2.1) could be detected. Participants shared the desire to accomplish their aims meaning that *task cohesion* (Yukelson, Weinberg, & Jackson, 1984; Siebold, 2007 or see 2.1 of this writing) could be also detectable

was prepared and performed in this case could present all the necessary indicators for the potential appearance of group flow.⁴⁵

The performance of *Complicity* in Bath (2012) had different characteristics. The piece was performed from the university experimental music ensemble *Material*. As the Head of Centre for Musical Research at Bath Spa University James Saunders runs the ensemble. I asked him how the ensemble was formed for this performance. James answered that

The group was already formed as an ensemble, *Material*, so the players were just those who were available and playing that term. My criteria were essentially just an interest in being involved, so there was no barrier to entry. (Saunders 2016)

The participation of James complicated things. It was very difficult for James to avoid playing his role as a teacher of the students in the group. Oogoo Maia said that 'James pulled people together, organized rehearsals and may have made decisions about the timing of each section' (Maia 2016).

The group took some decisions in a collective way, but James took a fairly prominent role in that. In his words:

It's difficult to avoid, sometimes for time reasons, other times because the suggestions were not necessarily in keeping with what I thought you might want. That's not a good solution of course, but I kind of ended up in that role. But that's not uncommon: I think I have a tendency to try to shape realisations in this group probably as I'm 'the teacher'. (Saunders 2016)

⁴⁵ See 2.5.1 of this writing.

Nevertheless there was some group talking during the selection of the actions the group wanted to perform and despite James taking control of the organisation to an extent

There was no full performance score. Members had their own individually made performance scores. They used the scores in a way that ‘they were not obvious to the audience’ (Ibid.). Saunders’ performance score for example was taped to the back of his ukulele (Fig. 31).

Fig. 31: Individual performance score for *Complicity* (2011), made by James Saunders, Bath, 2012

as I would like. Even if James would try very hard to create an environment of equality in the group it is unlikely that the students would take the initiatives they would take if the entire organisation of their performance were in their hands.



Fig: 32: Experimental group *Material* performing *Complicity* (2011), Bath, 2012

3.3.5 *One Minute is more than One Minute for a group of people* (2011/12)

The aim of this composition was to compose a verbal score which dealt exclusively with the production of sound. I was interested to investigate how I could describe verbally the sounds I would like to hear. The different actions were composed without a pre-existing plan. It was simply written from one action to the next one trying to have a variety of different combinations of the material in an unsystematic way.

Each member can perform only one action during one minute. Because of this requirement and the fact that one minute has 60 seconds I chose the number 60 for the total amount of the written actions. The main performance instructions remain the same with the other compositions I

presented in this writing. The duration of the piece can vary between one minute and 60 minutes.

The basic sonic material and playing techniques I used for the composition of the actions were:

Pitch / Note	Instrumental burble
Noise	Scream
Sound / Percussive Sound	Use of voice (Recitation of a text)
Chord / Cluster	Glissando
Melody	Tremolo

The durations, dynamics and the arrangement are described as:

Short	Continuous
Very short	Slow
Quiet	Fast
Very quiet	Played by 1/2/3/4/5 persons
Loud	Played by all the members of the group
Very loud	

The basic sonic material sometimes is given a specific 'character'. I used the attributes: furious / aggressive / intense / waving / non-vibrato. Players are invited sometimes to play in a 'synchronized' way or to scatter themselves in the performance space.

This was my first verbal score where I used the *declarative mood* for verbal instructions (Fig. 33). Instructions written in this mood 'need not be addressed to an agent' and they are useful when one 'wants to describe a procedure rather than give a command' (Lely and Saunders 2012: 32). I decided to work this way because I wanted to show that the focus of the piece is more on the produced sound than on the presence of the individual performer on stage.

at least five persons each make a synchronized different short and quiet noise

Fig. 33: Excerpt from the first page of *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012)

The first performance took place in KNOT Gallery Athens in 2013.⁴⁶ I asked four members of 6daEXIt Improvisation Ensemble and one student of the School of Language and Literature of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki to participate. In January 2015 a group consisting by six members of 6daEXIt played another version of the score during my talk *From the group improvisation practice to improvisation as a tool of musical composition* in State Museum for Modern Art in Thessaloniki.⁴⁷ Finally, another version of the piece is been performed by a group of students of University for Music and Performing Arts in Graz/Austria during the festival *Prenninger Resonanzen* in October 2015.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ 11/05/2013, KNOT Gallery Athens/Greece, 'One KEY for STC' - Concert with compositions by A.Porfiriadis

⁴⁷ 07/01/15, State Museum for Modern Art Thessaloniki

⁴⁸ 26/10/2015, Prenniger Resonanzen Festival, Kulturpension Prenning/Graz (Austria), Portrait Concert A. Porfiriadis

a. Performance in KNOT Gallery Athens, 2013

The group which performed the piece in Athens in 2013 consisted by the 6daEXIt members Odysseas Gkallios (his first experience in preparing and performing one of my scores), Olga Papakonstantinou and Georgia Koumara (who had already performed *Drops for ensemble*, *Spotting Nowhere* and *Complicity*), Stelios Tsairidis (who had also performed *Drops for ensemble*) and Angeliki Mousiou, a non-musician, literature student in her first experience of playing music with a group. I invited Angeliki to join the group to increase diversity in the group and try to avoid groupthink, due to the close relationship of the four members of 6daEXIt.

The group initially gathered together to make a first reading of the three scores they were going to perform in the concert (*One Minute is more than One Minute*, *STC*, *KEYS*). In this meeting they took no decisions. They agreed though to work individually choosing the actions they liked. At the second meeting they began working on the structure of their performance. Angeliki recounts:

During the second meeting we essentially made our score for *One Minute*, using some of the actions that each of us had chosen individually or using actions we chose at that time, in relation to the decisions of the co-players. (Mousiou 2013)



Fig. 34: A. Mousiou, G. Koumara, O. Papakonstantinou, S. Tsairidis and O. Gkallios preparing their performance, Thessaloniki, 2013

In this second meeting the group decided also that a total duration about 20 minutes 'would be suitable in relation to the material' (Tsairidis 2013) and that, in order to stay focus, they wanted to work minute-to-minute creating a full performance score that would comprise all the actions played by the group members. Analysing this score made by the participants, patterns and different densities are easily discernable. I asked the group members if during this minute-to-minute building of the structure they had also the overall structure and the creation of different densities in mind. Georgia Koumara answered that: 'Well, we always tried, even subconsciously. In *One Minute* we did a kind of recapitulation' (Koumara 2013).

Five basic 'pillars' are easily distinguishable in the full performance score. These are not signs of dramatization of the overall form though. During the interviews members of the group commented that there was no such thing in their minds. Olga Papakonstantinou said describing these parts: 'these were just our encounters' (Papakonstantinou 2013). The five pillars can be observed in minutes 0-2 (first pillar), at minute 6 to 7 (that is around the 1/3 of the structure), at minute 9 to 10 (middle part of the structure), 11-13 (just after the middle) and in minutes 17-19 (just before the end) (Fig. 35).

Fig. 35: Full performance score made collectively by the players for *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012), Thessaloniki, 2013

	0' - 1'00"	1'00" - 2'00"	2'00" - 3'00"	3'00" - 4'00"	4'00" - 5'00"	5'00" - 6'00"
Αγγελική	continuous loud noises, each lasting 80 secs and made by all the members of the ensemble (each member plays one noise)	all the members of the ensemble each play 60 different short notes and noises	two different chords (clusters) played at least by 3 persons (each performer plays one or two tones)	a continuous fast and furious melody, no pause, 10 secs by one person	quiet recitation of a text about fifteen by one person sitting among the audience 45 secs	three persons each play a synchronized different short and quiet pitch, one minute, played by one person
Ευρυπία				continuous and quiet instrument, twin	four different quiet and continuous noises, each made by one person and each lasting 15 secs	three persons each play a synchronized different short and quiet pitch, one minute, played by one person
Δουβέδας						three persons each play a synchronized different short and quiet pitch, one minute, played by one person
Δάνα						three persons each play a synchronized different short and quiet pitch, one minute, played by one person
Στέλιος						three persons each play a synchronized different short and quiet pitch, one minute, played by one person
Αγγελική	all the members of the ensemble each play 60 different short notes and noises	all the members of the ensemble each playing an action without an agreement with the fellow players (each member attributes her decisions during the rehearsals)	30 repetitions of a percussive sound with an intense tremolo lasting 3 secs and played by one person	continuous fast and furious melody with no pause, lasting one minute and played by all the members of the ensemble	quiet tremolo, each lasting 10 secs and played by 3 persons	a continuous quiet melody with no pause, lasting one minute and played by 3 persons
Ευρυπία						
Δουβέδας						
Δάνα						
Στέλιος						
Αγγελική	continuous and quiet instrumented burble, lasting 1 min and played by 1 person	three different continuous scratching on the loud pitch played by 1 person each lasting 15 secs	continuous and quiet instrumented burble, lasting 1 min and played by 1 person	all the members of the ensemble each play at least 3 different actions during one minute	all the members of the ensemble each play 60 different short notes and noises	continuous loud noises, each lasting 80 secs and made by all the members of the ensemble (each member plays one noise)
Ευρυπία						
Δουβέδας						
Δάνα						
Στέλιος						
Αγγελική	60 different short notes and noises played by 1 person	three different continuous scratching on the instruments, each played by 1 person (lasting 15 secs)	a continuous and quiet pitch, lasting 30 secs			a very short and very loud ensemble
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used repetitions of elements that could help these 'encounters' to be meaningful for them but also for the audience. The members of the group wanted to see if these five encounters 'could become perceptible' by the audience (Papakonstantinou 2013). Analysing the score one can observe that the action in minute 6-7 was the same with the action in minutes 1-2 and the two actions performed in minutes 17-19 were the same actions in minutes 0-2 in reversed sequence. I asked the players if they wanted to use any of these pillars as a climax of their version. Olga answered that: 'No, we did not have climaxes, just encounters' (Papakonstantinou 2013).

The described process shows that the verbal score provided a material the preparation and performance of which constituted a goal open enough for problem creativity to grow. The members of the group were in constant communication during the preparation of their version and listened closely to each other's opinions.

According to the instructions, each player could perform only one action per minute. Thus, when the action of the player did not last a whole minute, s/he had the option to choose the moment to enter. Odysseas recounts:

by realizing that during the given minute we had a few actions which lasted only a few seconds, I would consider to enter just a while after the rest so that the sonic density would not decrease significantly or to join along and increase it. (Gkallios 2013)

In sections where more than one player was needed, the team decided that one of them should give a sign. However, each member could enter the specific action within a time limit of 10 seconds. Thus, there was room for different reactions for each member of the group. This offered the group the opportunity for more spontaneous decisions during the performance. The ways performers decided when to play their sound within each minute and

the 10 seconds time limit they had at their disposal offered spontaneity in the final decisions during the performance.

The autonomous way of working resulted in the establishment of ‘some kind of collectivity or community’ because there was ‘no other choice if one wants to perform it’ (Mousiou 2013). In this environment participants took equally part and there was no leading person guiding their decisions. Stelios Tsairidis commented: ‘Well, there were no leadership initiatives. [...] We worked on the project all together, with a lot of discussion and collective decisions’ (Tsairidis 2013).⁴⁹

During the preparation there were no real debates and the group did not have to take any decisions using the majority principle. Angeliki recounts:

I do not recall any major disagreements between us. When we had two different views on a subject (this was often the case) then we all discussed what each view meant and then we decided in favour of the most functional solution for the group. It was more a ‘co-formulation’ related to what could be more ‘functional’ and based on arguments and propositions. (Mousiou 2013)

For Georgia familiarity was important for the final result. She felt that the preparation (included all the practicalities of it like rehearsal organising) and performance of *One Minute is more than One Minute* in this case went well because the majority of the group members were members and friends of 6daEXIt. In her words:

⁴⁹ ‘Group promotive interdependence’ (Deutsch 1949, see 2.1) and a ‘co-operative goal structure’ (Benson 2000, see 2.1) could be detected in the process described by the members of the group. Participants also shared the desire to accomplish their aims meaning that *task cohesion* (Yukelson, Weinberg, & Jackson, 1984; Siebold, 2007 or see 2.1 of this writing) could be also detectable.

I would say that plain collaboration is not enough. It is not enough to say 'hi, I came to play for two hours, I will not talk on anything else, we will do our business and I will go. I do not care to have even your phone numbers'. Theoretically one could do that also but I believe it would not be the same concerning the sound of the group. (Koumara 2013)

In conclusion, the preparation and performance of *One Minute is more than One Minute* for the concert in KNOT Gallery Athens flowed without any group dysfunctions. Performers had to find the problems related to their endeavour and the necessary solutions. To do that they were in constant communication, closely listening to each other. They participated equally in the project, enjoying the autonomy and creating a friendly and relaxed work environment. During performance they had also to take spontaneous decisions on the execution of the material. They succeeded on building their version of *One Minute is more than One Minute* collectively. The conditions for the potential appearance of group flow according to Sawyer (2007) were all present during the preparation and performance of the piece.

b. Performance in State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, January 2015

In January 2015 I was invited by the State Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessaloniki to participate in a series of lectures on experimental music, under the title 'Is that music?'⁵⁰ During my talk I wanted to have a live example of my work and I asked 6daEXIt to prepare a short version of *One Minute is more than One Minute*. The members who were interested to participate were Odysseas Gkalios, Yorgos Holopoulos, Dafne Mantousi, Jannis Milonelis, Stavroula Sotiri and Vassilis Voudouris. Only Odysseas

⁵⁰ <http://www.greekstatemuseum.com/kmst/pressroom/article/932.html>

among the participants had already played a number of my verbal/graphic pieces. This time I did not form the group myself. The group was formed simply by the members of our improvisation ensemble who were interested to take part. I did not make any effort to control it because I did not want to interfere in the decision of my co-players in 6daEXIt to join in or not.

The group worked in a similar way like the group of the premiere. Responsible for this decision was Odysseas, who followed the way of working he was familiar with from the last concert dedicated to my scores he took part. At the beginning of the process the situation was a bit chaotic because the only person who had an experience of organising such a score was Odysseas. Also, one of the members of the group did not take any initiatives but s/he wanted to play anyway. That led the rest of the group to take decisions on behalf of this member. And thirdly, the group tried during the actual rehearsals to 'mark' their entrances at least approximately (Holopoulos 2015).



Fig. 36: Performance of *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012),
Thessaloniki, 2015

The criteria for the actions chosen, according to the interviews with the players, were mainly 'aesthetical' and practical. They searched for actions that could be performed with the instruments they had at their disposal and the ones they simply liked. On a second level they tried to choose actions

that could result to an interesting 'orchestration' (Holopoulos 2015). Concerning the overall form of their version the members of the group wanted to 'build a short climax without being pretentious' (Sotiri 2015).

The group made a performance score (Fig. 37) after the proposition by Odysseas, who did the same thing during the performance of the piece in 2013. The climax that Stavroula was talking about is obvious in the fourth minute, where all the members of the group played 'continuous, fast and furious melodies with no pause, lasting one minute'. Like in the performance of 2013, during the first two minutes all the members of the group played one action per minute. They did the same thing in the climax in the fourth minute and during the last minute.

Fig. 37: Full performance score made collectively by the players for *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012), Thessaloniki, 2015

Τρύπος	0'	1'	2'	3'	4'	5'	6'	7'
Σταμπούλα	all the members of the ensemble scattered in the space and playing a total number of 20 sounds, each trying not to play his/her sound simultaneously with any other performer	all the members of the ensemble each play 60 different short notes and noises	four different quiet and continuous noises, each made by one person and each lasting 15 seconds	a continuous very slow glissando, lasting ten seconds and played by one person	continuous fast and furious melodies with no pause, lasting one minute and played by all the members of the ensemble	continuous and quiet instrumental burbles, each lasting 30 seconds and played by at least five persons	a quiet recitation of texts about 'time', by at least five persons scattered in the space, lasting 30 seconds	at least five actions with different character played from five members of the ensemble during one minute.
Δάφνη								
Βασίλης				quiet tremolo, each lasting ten seconds and played by two persons (each performer plays two pitches)			a very short and very loud pitch played by one person	
Οδυσσεύς			a very short and very loud pitch played by one person	a continuous and quiet pitch lasting one minute played by one person		a continuous very loud pitch, lasting 20 seconds and played by one person (person should distance herself from the other members of the ensemble)	a quiet recitation of texts about 'time', by at least five persons scattered in the space, lasting 30 seconds	
Τάκης			an intense tremolo lasting three seconds and played by one person	a pitch/noise with an instrument, played with a technique never used before by the performer (don't rehearse it before the concert)		continuous and quiet instrumental burbles, each lasting 30 seconds and played by at least five persons		

The process followed by the participants shows that the score offered a goal open enough for problem creativity to grow. Performers communicated listening closely to each other's opinions, finding collectively ways of building their version of the piece. They also managed to prepare a part for a member, who did not take energetically part in the preparation.

Performers (with one exception) took part in the preparation in an equal way, blending their egos and being in total control of their endeavour. No member dominated the discussions. Vasilis Voudouris recounted that: 'No one had the role of a leader. The members of the group worked in an equal basis as we do also in our improvisation group' (Voudouris 2015). Vasilis also pointed out something that I too find very important. He said:

I think it was a very positive step for all of us that except of the pure musical decisions we had to make, we were responsible for the planning of the rehearsals without the supervision of anyone else. I am sure that this fact had a positive impact on all of us in general. (Voudouris 2015)⁵¹

All participants found the requirement of the score to put their individual desires in the service of the group very interesting. In Yorgos' words:

it was always very interesting trying to balance my own ideas with the collective choices, to restrain my creative egoism to the benefit of the collective process described by the preparation instructions of the score. This is an example of how making music could help us socially. (Holopoulos 2015)

⁵¹ 'Group promotive interdependence' (Deutsch 1949, see 2.1) and a 'co-operative goal structure' (Benson 2000, see 2.1) could be detected in the process described by the members of the group. Participants also shared the desire to accomplish their aims meaning that *task cohesion* (Yukelson, Weinberg, & Jackson, 1984; Siebold, 2007 or see 2.1 of this writing) could be also detectable.

The group members felt safe to act creatively because the group was consisted of members of 6daEXIt. Even the main shortcoming of the process, meaning the fact that a group member did not work energetically with the others but s/he wanted to play anyway, was solved by the rest of the group who decided collectively on his/her part. It is interesting that performers did not just ask the non-energetic member to leave the group but tried to find a solution to keep both the group and the player happy. Despite this difficulty, one could assert that all conditions for the potential appearance of group flow, namely a goal open-enough for problem creativity to grow, familiarity between members, close listening between the performers and blending of egos, a low-pressure work environment, being in control of their project and equal participation, were present in this preparation and performance of this piece's version.

c. Performance in *Prenninger Resonanzen Festival* in Graz, October 2015

After an invitation by the composer/improviser and part-time lecturer in University for Music and Performing Arts Graz/Austria Elisabeth Harnik, I visited Graz for a concert dedicated to my verbal/graphic compositions in October 2015. A group of five people was formed by Elisabeth asking students of her improvisation class to participate. I asked Elisabeth to include in the group Antonis Rouvelas, a former member of 6daEXIt Improvisation Ensemble, who had played two of my verbal/graphic scores (*Drops* and *Complicity*) in the past and happened to study composition in Graz at this period. The other four performers were the pianist Alexandra Radoulova and the clarinetist Renate Rakova, who were students in the master's study program 'Performance Practice in Contemporary Music'; Lee Wen-Cheh, who studied composition and in this project played trombone (Wen-Cheh) and Mara Probst who studied viola in the soloist department. Antonis played percussion, objects and recorder in this project. This was,

therefore, a different case from the groups that had played my verbal/graphic scores up to this point. All performers were 'specialised' in contemporary music, but with exception of Antonis, were not really familiar with the verbal/graphic notation tradition. In addition to that and according to the interviews with the participants, all members except Antonis had no experience in structuring a version of an open form piece.

It is obvious that I influenced the way the group worked by asking that a former member of 6daEXIt and friend of mine would take part. However, the groups playing my pieces are, at least until now, planned groups and Elisabeth asked me what I think about the group she had in mind. I thought that it would be simply a pity not to have Antonis in this project. Not because I would have a better result, but just because his is a friend of mine and I wanted very much to have him in the concert.

The first thing the group did was to try and sort the notated actions individually and to categorise them in order to be aware of the material provided by the composition. All the members of the group did that, each in his/her way. Alexandra recounts:

I coloured them in red and green in order to remember the more active or the quieter. I remember in this way for example how many people take part in the action, how long it is and what kind of sound it produce. At the end I had six or seven categories of sound actions, including the undefined ones. (Radoulova 2015) (Fig. 38)

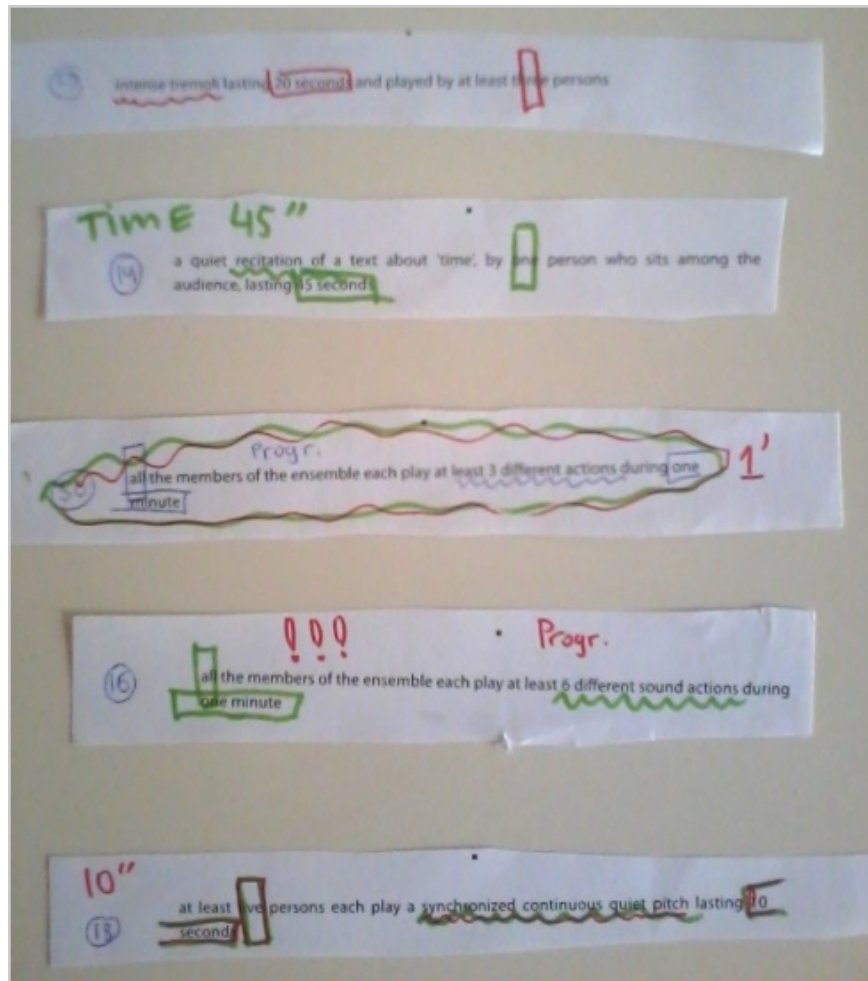


Fig. 38: Extract from the categorisation made by A. Radoulova, for *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012), Graz, 2015

When they started working together the players put numbers on the written actions, so they could communicate using a common basis (and this is why I revised the score after the concert putting numbers myself in it). They also agreed to create a 20-minute structure for their version, as well as a common performance score, so that each member knows what the other members are doing at all times. As Renate recounts, during the biggest part of the first rehearsal they just went through all of the actions and discussed what they could mean (Rakova 2015).

Then they started choosing collectively, using the blackboard (Rakova 2015) the actions that they would like to constitute their final material. With this

material the group collectively created eight minutes of music initially. From this point onwards there was a difficulty to proceed. Renate asserted in the interview that the basic hurdle was the lack of time:

I remember that it was a Sunday, we had worked already for four hours and we were tired. I think that if we had more time we could be able to compose the whole piece like that. We just did not have three extra days to work on this. (Rakova 2015)

Antonis described that the main problem for him was that he could not think while the others were talking. He was trying hard hearing and thinking on the propositions of his co-players and that often blocked his own thinking (Rouvelas 2015).⁵² Another reason why the group did not succeed to continue with the building of the structure in a strictly collective way was that, as Alexandra said, they ‘took into serious consideration the opinion of each member of the group’ and that lead them sometimes ‘to endless discussions’ (Radulova 2015).

The group worked hard to build these eight minutes of music. However, they wanted their version to last 20 minutes and they were a week away from the actual performance. So, they were afraid that they would not manage to carry out the project (they performed two more compositions from my collection of verbal scores *People's Music*, 2008/9). As a result they decided that each performer would compose four minutes of music with the material chosen collectively by the group. Afterwards they could work on this material to see how they are going to use it. So, in the next meeting Alexandra (Fig. 39), Mara (Fig. 40), Wen-Cheh (Fig. 41), and Antonis (Fig. 42) brought their 4 or 6-minute (Wen-Cheh) structure and the group started to work with the collectively and individually made material.

⁵² This problem is similar to the problem called ‘production blocking’ (Diehl and Ströbe 1987) analysed in 2.2 of this writing.



Fig. 39: Individual performance score made by A. Radoulova for *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012), Graz 2015

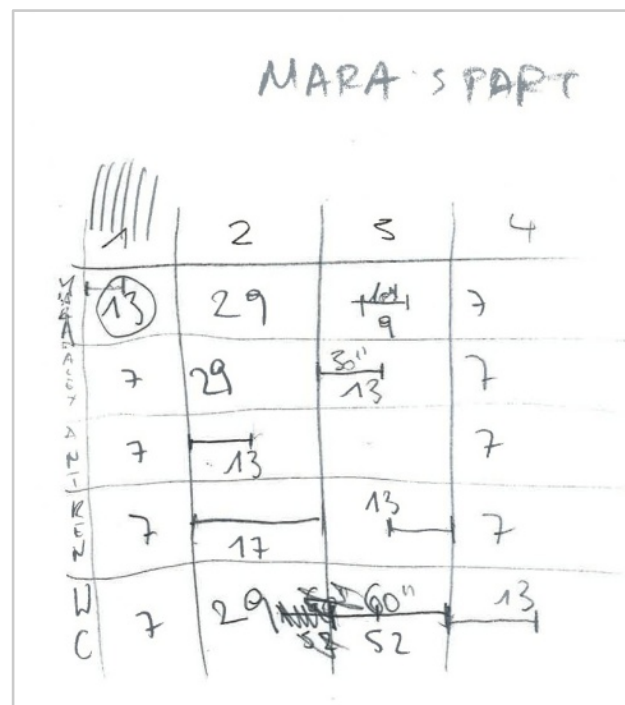


Fig. 40: Individual performance score made by M. Probst for *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012), Graz 2015

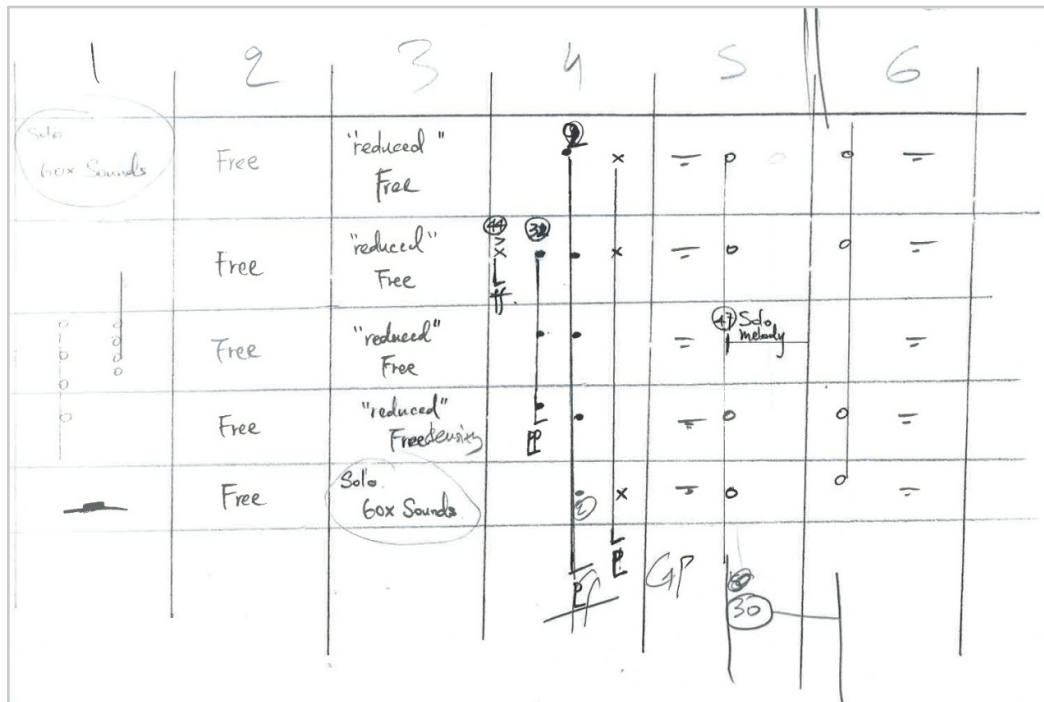


Fig. 41: Individual performance score made by L. Wen-Cheh for *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012), Graz, 2015

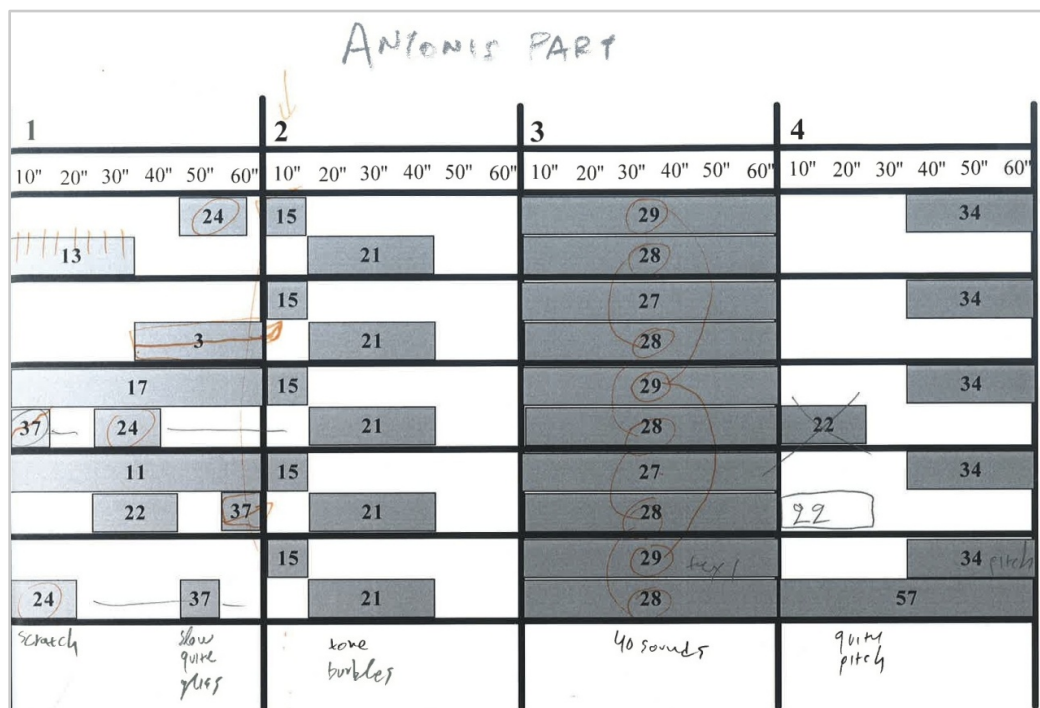


Fig. 42: Individual performance score made by A. Rouvelas for *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012), Graz, 2015

The 4-minute parts that Antonis, Alexandra, Wen-Cheh and Mara composed were put into collective consideration. Antonis said: 'I have to say that we composed these parts individually but we discussed them and we changed a lot of things during the process' (Rouvelas 2015). The group used this material in combination with three of the eight minutes of their collectively composed material to construct their final version. Antonis was aware of the Athens performance of *One Minute is more than One Minute* in 2013 and he knew that the group made a full performance score (Fig. 43). So he was the one who proposed to his co-players to make such a score and he was also the one who designed it. Renate found very important that Antonis proposed that the group would make a performance score: 'I found it very helpful. Without it I think we would need even more time' (Rakova 2015).

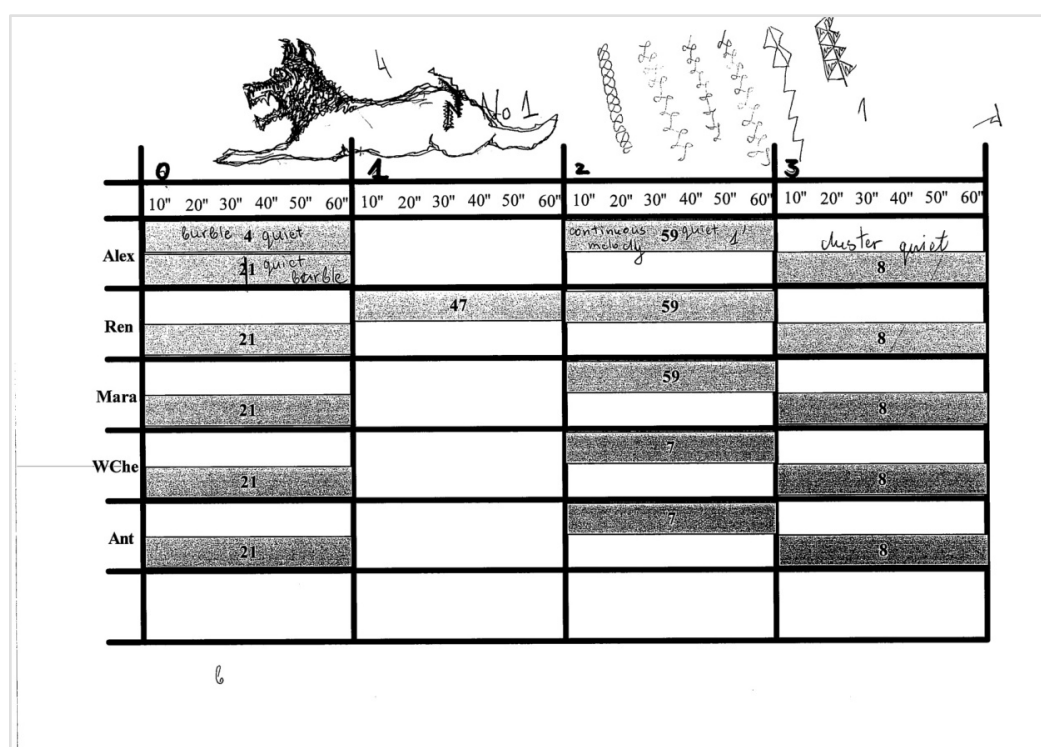


Fig. 43: Full performance score made collectively by the players for *One Minute is more than One Minute* (2012), Graz, 2015 (Alexandra Radoulova's part)

The described process shows that performers were in communication, listening closely to each other's views and found collectively possible

solutions on the problems raised by my open-form work. Even their decision to construct parts of their version of the piece individually was a conscious collective decision, based on the rehearsal time available. Furthermore, the parts became subjects of collective examination and alteration.



Fig. 44: M. Probst, A. Rouvelas, A.Radulova, R. Rakova and L. Wen-Cheh preparing their version of *One Minute is more than One Minute*, Graz, 2015

During the discussions and creation of the structure the group worked in harmony. According to the interviews they all participated equally to the conversation and in general the group did not take any decisions using the majority principle but through searching of consensus. Asking the members to tell me more on this issue Antonis commented:

Some members were more active, meaning that they spoke more than the others. This has to do with the different characters of the members. For example Alexandra was speaking much, she was more active in this level, but that has nothing to do with the final decisions we made. (Rouvelas 2015)

All members of the group were happy, despite the practical problems and the final collective decision to build individual parts and to combine them

collectively, that they had the opportunity to make their own version of the piece. Renata recounts:

We are actually became composers for a small period of time and the most interesting part for me was to see how we tried to agree on something and how it didn't work [laughter] a couple of times. (Rakova 2015)⁵³

I asked the performers how they used their actions that did not have duration of a whole minute. How they decided where they would make their entrances. The answers were various. Alexandra recounts: 'I was listening what is going on. If there was space for my action and it fitted well then I was starting doing it' (Radoulova 2015). On the contrary Wen-Cheh asserted that he also took decisions in a random way and Antonis made a specific plan in his head about when he will play his sounds.

In conclusion, the whole experience was positive for the performers. The process had the characteristics I am searching for, despite the fact that the participants took the decision to make the biggest part of the performance material individually and only to work on it collectively afterwards. The performers discussed, negotiated and argued for many hours and took all their final decisions collectively. Despite the (in part) individual process, there was a serious fermentation of perspectives, equality during the process and collective assumption of responsibility.

Of course it was not an ideal process because the group did not manage to structure their whole version in a collective way. The experience from this performance pointed out that the process required in my scores needs time

⁵³ Despite any shortcomings one could assert that 'Group promotive interdependence' (Deutsch 1949, see 2.1), a 'co-operative goal structure' (Benson 2000, see 2.1) and *task cohesion* (Yukelson, Weinberg, & Jackson, 1984; Siebold, 2007 or see 2.1 of this writing) could be detectable also in this process.

to evolve and any pressure on the performers can have negative consequences. Collective choices are not always easy and people have to have time to relax and come to conclusions. Furthermore, another important reported problem was the one described by Antonis and had to do with 'production blocking'. It is not always easy for group members to propose solutions and in the same time to elaborate on the ideas of their co-performers. This situation could cause group dysfunction.

However, despite the shortcomings it could be asserted that the conditions regarding the potential appearance of group flow were present. There was an open form score the performance of which constituted an open enough goal. Performers worked closely, in an equal way, being in control of their endeavour, in a low-pressure environment, blending their egos to move forward their collaboration.

3.3.6 *STC* for ensemble (2012)

In *STC* I wanted to leave even more space for performers to act creatively. Thus in this score there is no fixed material that the group can use but group members have to build the material themselves. In addition to that I used terms like 'square sound', 'triangular sound', 'circulate a sound', to invite performers to find solutions and to have sonic or visual results that I could never thought of. The composition is for a group consisting by at least four performers. It includes 63 pages of graphic material.

Every page of *STC* contains one or two geometrical figures (square, circle or triangle). Inside of each shape there is a verb in the centre and words or small phrases scattered in it (Fig. 45). Performers are invited to construct sentences individually or collectively. These sentences should be syntactically correct and be formed using the material provided inside each geometrical shape. The group can agree upon one solution or more than

one, since the possible combinations concerning the material given within each geometrical figure are numerous.

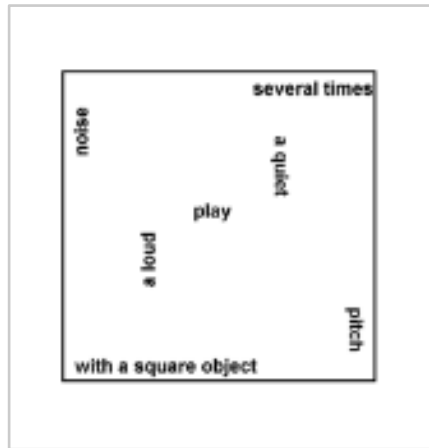


Fig. 45: Excerpt from *Play 1, STC* for ensemble (2012)

Six different verbs are used, which present the six categories of performance in *STC*:

Build	Move
Circulate	Play
Make	Recite

There are two pages using 'Recite' as the main verb, four pages using 'Build', four pages using 'Circulate', four pages using 'Make', 16 pages using 'Play' and 33 pages using 'Move'. The 33 pages of 'Move' category include combinations with all the other verbs, e.g. 'move while playing', 'move while building', 'move while making', 'move while reciting', 'move around'. The verbs used describe the main way an action is to be performed and are to be taken literally. The words provided inside each shape for making the instruction(s) are influenced by the geometrical shape itself (e.g. if it is a square then I would use 4 sounds, because of the four corners of the shape). The geometrical shapes influence also the suggested actions. They are being

placed in nine different places in an A4 page (Fig. 46). Some examples of the numerous possible instructions:

- Build 1 (shape: Square): Build a square with your sounds
- Circulate 3 (shape: Circle): Circulate a round object
- Make 4 (shape: Triangle): Make a continuous noise using a triangular object
- Move 27 (shape: Square): Move slowly forming a square
- Play 13 (shape: Triangle): Play 3 triangular sounds just for yourself
- Recite 2 (shape: Circle): Recite a story about a circle of lovers

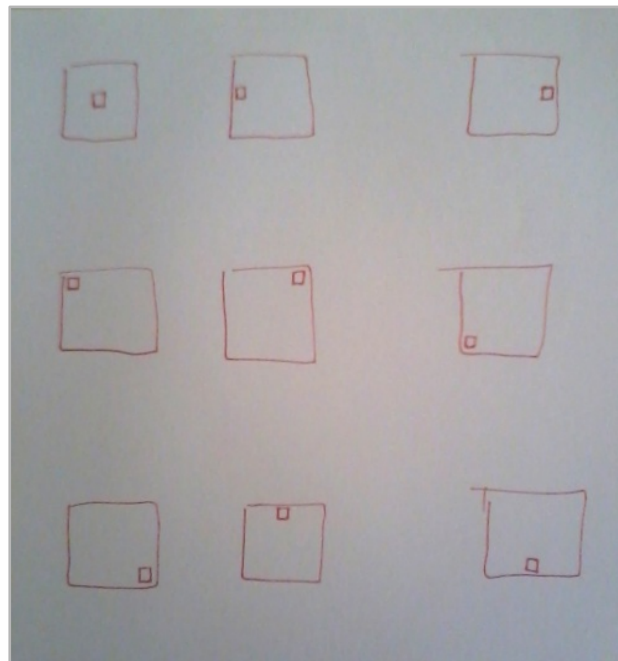


Fig. 46: Manuscript of the 'action space' with the nine spots, for *STC* (2012)

After performers complete their endeavour of the possible combinations and decide on the instructions they are going to use for their performance, they should proceed in the same way like in all my verbal/graphic pieces and build their version of *STC* in a collective way.

Players should mark nine spots within the performance space on which the actions are to be performed. These spots should be grouped in three lines of

three spots each, arranged in such a way that a rectangular ‘action space’ would be formed. This ‘action space’ should be formed regardless of the shape of the actual performance space, and must include any (large enough) amount of it. In Fig.47 one can see the formation of a rectangular action space within a pentagon performance space.

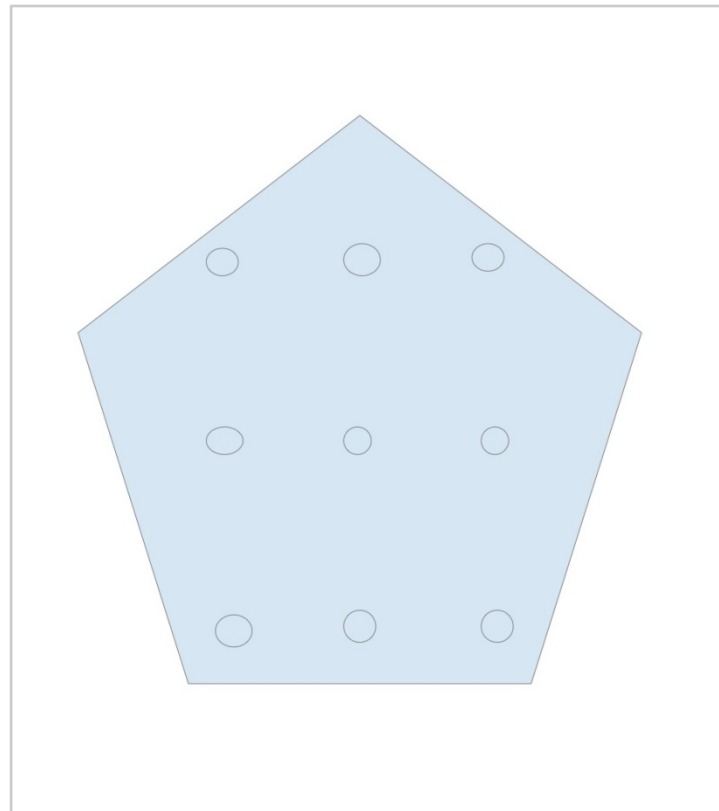


Fig. 47: Formation of a rectangular action space within a pentagon performance space for *STC* (2012)

STC was premiered together with *One Minute is more than One Minute* by the same group. The performance group consisted of the 6daEXIt members Odysseas Gkallios, Olga Papakonstantinou, Georgia Koumara, Stelios Tsairidis and the literature student Angeliki Mousiou. *STC* is a complicated score, as performers do not just follow prewritten instructions but have to build them themselves. In addition, the arrows of the ‘move’ category on the score obviously indicate that people have to move around something or move while playing, making or reciting something. The fact that five persons

may have to move (depending on their decisions) makes the project a rather complicated one.

The group started working in a collective way trying to decipher the way the score could work. The group worked for many hours trying to make a full performance score. Olga was responsible of writing it down.

The full score indicated time and space snapshots of what was going to happen. The process was absolutely collective. We tried to decide collectively the movements of each person, of the subgroups we built or of the entire group. The way of working was similar to that of *One Minute is more than One Minute*, meaning that we build our structure first drafts working minute-to-minute. (Tsairidis 2013)

This process 'ended up in chaos' (Papakonstantinou 2013). Performers made a 'terribly complicated score trying to describe all the movements in the space. Olga recounts: 'We spend many hours doing that' (Ibid.). After some days they gathered in the rehearsal space and tried it out. Georgia recounts:

It was a terribly kitschy thing (laughter). This complicated score we made, with all those shapes, crosses, movements, etc. would be great if we would have another month for rehearsing it. (Georgia 2013)

Analysing the 11-page performance score made collectively by the group (Fig. 48) one can easily understand that it is a complicated composition of moves and sounds. Performers chose 46 different actions⁵⁴ to make a 13-minute version of the composition, while 23 of them were from the 'move'

⁵⁴ *Play* 1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,13,14,15,16 / *Make* 1,2,4 / *Build* 2,3 / *Move* 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,12,13, 14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,27,28,29,30,31,33 / *Circulate* 1,2,3 / *Recite* 1,2

category. This means that to perform this version the players would have to be constantly in flux between the nine spots of the 'action space'. These complicated movement/sound combinations are playable but would need enough time for rehearsals. The group of the 2013 performance had to play three different scores in the same concert. This played its role for the rejection of this version.

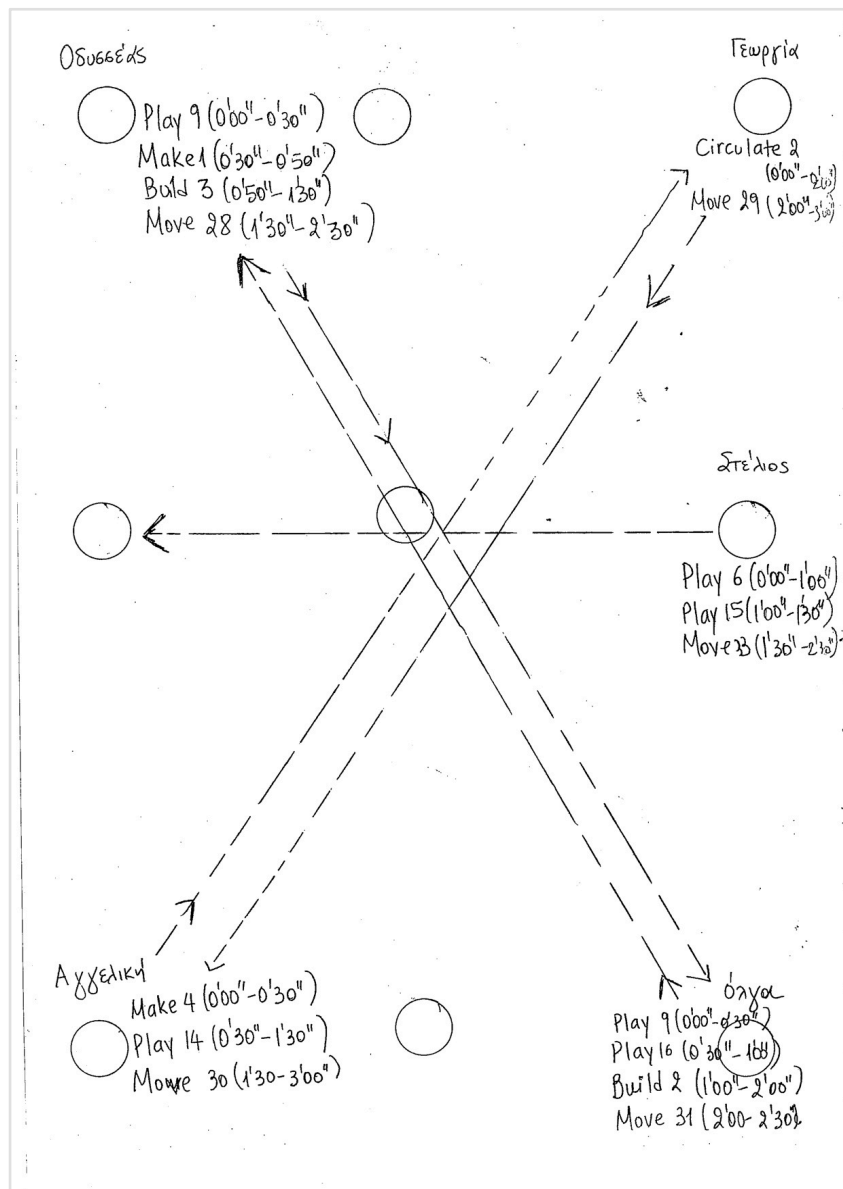


Fig. 48: Not used collectively made performance score for *STC* (2012), Page 1, Thessaloniki, 2013

After testing the score the group decided to keep the collectively chosen actions as basic material but each of the performers to make individually: a) a reduction of the material used and b) a program of actions after the fourth minute of the version. For the first four minutes the group maintained the collectively made structure. Georgia recounts:

We realised that we did not need all those movements we used in the first version to have an interesting sonic result. We also realised that we should use in a more effective way the durational freedom given by the score. (Koumara 2013)

In other words, performers took the collective decision to work individually at least for a part of their version of the piece. This decision had to do with the available time. Odysseas recounts that they would need even more time 'to space out' their structure collectively: 'In other words we did that individually for practical and time reasons. Nevertheless, we controlled the whole thing in a collective way (Gkallios 2013). The whole process shows that performers worked listening closely each other and finding collectively solutions on the problems raised by the score.

Performers realised that even if each of them prepares his/her own program of actions s/he would have to be in constant negotiation with the other players of the group. According to Angeliki

In this case each of us worked individually but one was obliged to know what the others are doing at specific moments. For example, to complete my score I had to know if a specific spot in the 'action space' was free at a particular moment. To be aware of that it is obvious that I would have to negotiate with my co-players. (Mousiou 2013)

Working this way each member of the group made his/her own performance score removing actions from their initially collectively made score (Fig. 49). Then they discussed about it collectively and make groups of two or three people that worked in some way together in given moments. This was an easier way to organise their performance because each person had to be in constant relation not with all four co-players but with one or two people during each minute (Mousiou 2013).

score:	position/move:	action:	shape:
time:		[make 4] make a continuous noise	
[1] 0.00" - 0.30"	[7]	on your instr. using a triangular object duration 30 sec.	Δ
[2] 0.30" - 0.1.30"	[7]	[play 14] play a repeated circle of 4 sounds duration 1 min	○
[3] 0.1.30" - 0.2.00"	[4]	[move 20] move while playing a square melody a fast duration 30 sec	◻
[4] 0.2.00" - 0.2.10"	[12]	[move 6] move while playing soft/hard noises with square object duration 10 sec.	◻
[5] 0.2.10" - 0.4.10"	[2]	[build 1] build a square with your instr./sounds/bodies + [make 2] make circular actions/thoughts/conversations duration 2 min	◻
[6] 0.4.10" - 0.4.30"	[14]	[move 14] move while building a square with your sound duration 20 sec	◻
[7] 4.30" - 0.4.35"	[5 tutti]	[play 1] play a quite/loud noise/pitch with a square object several times duration 5 sec.	◻

Fig. 49: Excerpt from the individual performance score made by A. Mousiou for STC (2012), Thessaloniki, 2013.

Performers chose the actions of their version having in mind principally the movement required by the 'move' category of actions than with sound criteria. Olga commented:

I think that we did not go in the direction of choosing actions depending on their sound result in *STC*. What we tried to do was primarily to combine instructions in order to have the right movement that would not cause any problems. I think none of us knew until the last rehearsal what the final sonic result will be. (Papakonstantinou 2013)

In conclusion, this was a case where performers were initially too ambitious in working on their version and making their score. They made something that was too complicated for them to perform, due to the available time and rehearsals. However, they found solutions on their problem collectively and they succeed on making a performance based on the collectively chosen material. According to the interviews, the experiences concerning collaboration, familiarity, equal participation, work environment and autonomy, are identical with those described in the preparation of *One Minute is more than One Minute*. In other words, despite the practical problems and the partly individual work of the participants, it could be asserted that all important conditions for the potential appearance of group flow were present in the preparation and performance of *STC*.



Fig. 50: Preparing *STC* (2012), Thessaloniki 2013

3.4 Summary

In this chapter I examined the way I work compositionally, as well as the reasons of working towards this direction. Through the analysis of the preparation processes and performances of my open form pieces between 2011 and 2015 by interviewing the participants or by silently observing rehearsals and performances, I investigated the potential appearance of the indications of group flow, as described by the social psychologist Keith Sawyer.

I investigated whether there was a goal for the performers open-ended enough for problem creativity to grow, if performers communicate listening closely with each other and react in planned or spontaneous ways. I researched if they were in control of their actions and if they succeed in creating a low-pressure work environment. Furthermore, I asked them if they participated equally in the project and if they submitted their egos to the group during the preparation and performance. Finally, I researched if the group was a safe place for them to act creatively and if they build on each other's ideas.

'Collective mind', which is another way of describing what Sawyer calls group flow, is, as shown in 2.3, a disputable term and researchers have different views on the subject (Allport 1924; Durkheim 1966; Forsyth 2010; Lewin 1951; Sawyer 2007). I am interested in researching the conditions described by Sawyer simply because they all are indicators that a group is being creative collectively, working in an egalitarian way. The answers by the performers during interviews and the processes they used showed that all indicators of collective work described by Sawyer as indicators for the appearance of group flow could be detectable during the preparation and performance of my open form pieces in the context of this research.

My work is based heavily on people and their relationships. In other words I am interested in the subjective reflection of people I work with. Their thoughts, opinions and experiences may not offer a basis for generalisations but it has its own value and offers me a feedback necessary to continue working on open form musical pieces for groups.

4. Conclusion

Since 2008 I have been writing music using verbal and graphic notation and open forms. Through the performance instructions I built gradually between 2008 and 2015, I ask people to work collectively prior to the performance to construct their version of the piece. No individual should take any decisions on behalf of the group and no performed version of any piece should be repeated. Furthermore, once a group has started working I do not interfere in their endeavour in any way, hoping that the groups will act autonomously in all aspects regarding the preparation and performance of a piece. I often have to organise the structure of the group though, mainly for practical reasons. Naturally, my decisions influence the outcomes in a way that I nevertheless cannot really control.

This processes changed the way I act as a composer and, strange as it may sound, I could say that it also changed the way I act as a person. Working this way led me to have no specific expectations when I go to a concert that includes my pieces. I learned to accept any sonic and visual results that would come from serious work with my scores. In general I became more open and more tolerant. I also learned to compose for the music community I live in and not for abstract groups of people. Despite the fact that any group, anywhere, can perform my scores, I compose them with specific people in my mind. Furthermore, I compose them to provide material for creative (I hope) endeavours for my friends and co-players in the improvisation group of which I am a member. I feel thus like a craftsman, who designs objects which his community could use in a creative way. This fact makes me happier as a person as well as an artist.

Furthermore, the experiences I had with non-musicians that took part in performances of my pieces (and also in numerous workshops I convened since 2007) gave me positive feedback on the notion that what I do could be socially and politically useful. Namely, I have the opportunity to open this

kind of activity to people who, for various reasons, are not musicians, cannot read staff notation and never have played music in a group. This idea fits absolutely in my social and political beliefs and without this kind of thinking I could not continue to write music.

This way of working has its limitations and problems. Despite the possible problems I feel that I am going in the right direction when an amateur-musician performer says that:

In my mind I had to do something that was free and simultaneously concrete. I had a freedom, which I knew. I studied it. We rehearsed freedom. (Giannezi 2012)

When performers 'rehearse freedom', when they take collective responsibility for their preparation and performance of the piece, when they act in an autonomous way, then one can not rule out the possibility that this procedure can influence the way participants will act in their everyday life. If this experience changes the way they organize their daily life then the aim of my pieces is reached.

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